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UNIVERSALISM ASSERTED

ON THE AUTHORITY OF

REASON, THE FATHERS, & HOLY SCRIPTURE.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS ALLIN.

"A threefold cord is not quickly broken."—*Eccles.* iv. 12.

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PREFACE.

The question of questions to which an answer is attempted in the following pages, is essentially this, can Evil triumph finally over Good? If we answer affirmatively with the popular creed, we are practically falling into Dualism; if we reply negatively, we are teaching Universalism. Such are the issues really involved. The more often and the more clearly this is stated as the turning point of the entire controversy about the larger hope, the better for those who write, and for those who read. The Calvinist settled this question by, in fact, affirming that if evil triumphs, it is because GOD so orders, *i.e.*, because GOD decrees to evil an eternal existence; thus saving or trying to save GOD'S omnipotence, but at no less a cost than that of blackening HIS character, nay, of virtually making HIM a partner in evil. But the popular creed saves neither the omnipotence of GOD, nor yet preserves HIS character. Sin, the one thing most utterly hateful in HIS sight, HE tolerates for ever and ever, poisoning and defiling HIS works, and defying HIS power—satisfied, if in this brief life he cannot have obedience and righteousness —*satisfied* with endless disobedience and sin hereafter! He appears before all creation as trying to dislodge sin, only to fail; as sending HIS Divine Son to save all men in order that HE may return rejected, baffled, vanquished. And so the curtain falls on the great drama of creation and redemption, presenting such a picture as this—a baffled Saviour, a victorious Devil, a ruined creation, sin triumphant —and so to continue for ever—a heaven wholly base (p. 42), a hell wholly miserable. Strong as these

words are, they are not strong enough, for the horrors and the contradictions of the popular creed alike defy description. And these horrors are taught, these contradictions are believed in the face of the plainest teaching of GOD'S two revelations, HIS primary revelation to our moral sense, HIS written revelation in Holy Scripture. Of the former and its teachings, it is needless to speak here; of the latter I have spoken at some length, and have tried to shew that from its first page to its last the Bible is the story of one who is our Father—one whose 'wrath,' and 'fire,' and 'judgement,' are at once most real, and yet one and all are the expressions of that essential Love which HE is—One who being Almighty is sending HIS Son to assured victory, to reconcile to HIMSELF all things, 'whatsoever and wheresoever they be.' I know how eagerly men strive to save the popular creed by various modifications, by diminishing the number of the lost, by softening their torments, by asserting their annihilation, &c. What are all these but so many tacit confessions that men everywhere feel it impossible to maintain the creed still generally *professed?* What are they but in fact so many vain attempts to disguise the awful fact of GOD'S defeat, to hide if it may be the victory of the Evil One? For so long as sin lingers in a *single* heart, so long as a *single* child of the Great Parent perishes eternally, whether annihilated, or sent to Hell, so long is the Cross a failure, and the Devil practically victor.

In deference to the wishes of friends, I have taken advantage of issuing a new edition to change the title of this volume, for one expressing more clearly its purpose. I may, perhaps, add that the present edition has been, not alone most carefully revised, but very considerably enlarged, and, indeed, in some parts wholly re-written, especially those dealing with the patristic evidence.

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ERRATA.

(1) Page 78. For "Clement" read "Clemens."

(2) „ 80. The treatise *De unct. Christ.* belongs to a later age than S. Cyprian.

„ „ The passage quoted from *De myst. Pasch.* is from S. Ambrose and not from Ambrosiaster, to whom the passage assigned to S. Ambrose on p. 81 belongs. Of the two passages assigned to S. Gregory the last is not his.

(3) „ 109. For "Durandas" read "Durandus."

(4) „ 187. For pp. 38-9 read p. 53.

(5) „ 200. For pp. 2-3 read pp. 11-12.

(6) „ 238. Add the following after the words "mercy to everyone:"—"Thus, too, light falls on the remarkable words of Scripture, 'The law entered *that the offence might abound*,' and so the law is 'our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.'"

(7) „ 253. Omit " in third and fourth lines.

"THE QUESTION STATED."

CHAPTER 1.

THE QUESTION STATED.

"Shall not the judge of all the earth do right."—GEN. xviii. 25.

What am I but the creature Thou hast made?
What have I but the blessings Thou hast lent?
What hope I but Thy mercy and Thy love? * *
Thou wilt not hold in scorn the child who dares
Look up to Thee, the Father. * * * O. W. HOLMES.

1. The following pages are written under the pressure of a deep conviction, that the views generally held, as to the future punishment of the ungodly, wholly fail to satisfy the plain statements of Holy Scripture. The popular creed has maintained itself on a Scriptural basis solely, I believe, by hardening into dogma mere figures of oriental imagery; by mistranslations and misconceptions of the sense of the original (to which our Authorised Version largely contributes); and finally, by completely ignoring a vast body of evidence in favour of the salvation of all men, furnished, as will be shewn, by very numerous passages of the New Testament, no less than by the great principles that pervade the teaching of all Revelation. Again, I write, because persuaded, that however loudly asserted

and widely held, the popular belief is at best a Tradition—is not an Article of Faith in the Catholic Church—is taught in no Creed—is accepted by no General Council, nay is distinctly opposed to the views of not a few of the holiest and wisest Fathers of the Church, in primitive times; who, in so teaching, expressed the belief of very many, if not the majority, of Christians in their days.

2. Further, I write, because deeply and painfully convinced of the very serious mischief which has been, and is being produced by the views generally held. They in fact tend, as nothing else ever has, to cause, I had almost said, to justify, the scepticism now so widely spread; they effect this because they so utterly conflict with any conception we can form of common justice and equity.

3. Therefore of mercy I shall say little in these pages: it is enough to appeal, when speaking of moral considerations, to that sense of Right and Wrong which is GOD'S voice speaking within us. Indeed, among the many misconceptions with which all higher views of the Gospel are assailed, few are more unfounded, than that which asserts, that thus GOD'S justice is forgotten in the prominence assigned to HIS mercy. This objection merely shews a complete misapprehension of the views here advocated. For these views do in fact appeal to, and by this appeal recognise, first of all, the justice of GOD.

It is precisely the sense of natural equity which GOD has planted within us, that the popular belief in endless torment most deeply wounds.

4. And these considerations are in fact a complete answer to some other objections often heard. "Why disturb men's minds," it is said, "why unsettle their faith, why not let well alone?" By all means, I reply, let well alone, but never let ill alone. Men's minds are already disturbed: it is because they are already disturbed, that we would calm them, and would restore the doubters to faith, by pointing them to a larger hope, to a truer Christianity. A graver objection arises, but like the former wholly without foundation in fact. It is said, "By this larger hope you, in fact, either weaken "or wholly remove all belief in future punish- "ment. You explain away the guilt of sin." The very opposite is surely the truth, for you establish future punishment, and with it that sense of the reality of sin (to which conscience testifies) on a firm basis, only when you teach a plan of retribution, which is itself reasonable and credible. A penalty which to our reason and moral sense seems shocking, and monstrous, loses all force as a threat. It has ever been thus in the case of human punishments. And so in the case of Hell. Outwardly believed it has ceased to touch the conscience or greatly to influence the life of Christians. To the mass of men it has become a name and little more (not

seldom a jest); to the sceptic it has furnished the choicest of his weapons; to the man of science a mark for loathing and scorn: while, alas, to many a sad and drooping heart, who longs to follow CHRIST more closely, it is the chief woe and burden of life. But the conscience, when no longer wounded by extravagant dogmas, is most ready to acquiesce in any measure of retribution (how sharp soever it be) which yet does not shock the moral sense, and conflict with its deepest convictions. And so the larger hope most fully recognises at once the guilt of sin, and the need of fitting retribution: nay, it may be claimed for it, that it alone places both on a firm and solid basis, by bringing them into harmony with the verdict of reason, of conscience, and of Holy Scripture.

5. It is better now for clearness sake, to define that popular view of future punishment, of which I shall often speak. It is briefly this: That God will after death pass on the ungodly a sentence of endless pain, of endless torments; that from this suffering there is no hope of escape; that of this torment there is no possible alleviation. That when your imagination has called up a series of ages, in apparently endless succession, all these ages of pain and of agony, undergone by the lost, have diminished their cup of suffering by not so much as one single drop; their pain is then no nearer ending than before. Those who hold this terrible doctrine to be a part

of the "glad tidings of great joy" to men from their Father in Heaven, differ indeed as to the number of the finally lost: some make them to be a majority of mankind, some a minority. Now it may be gravely questioned whether there can be any doubt at all *from their point of view* on this head. For the texts on which they rely seem, to most minds, if they teach the popular creed at all, to teach, just as clearly, that the lost shall be the majority of men. "Many are called "but *few* are chosen." "Fear not *little* flock." "Narrow is the way that leadeth to life and *few* "there be that find it." "With *most* of them, "GOD was not well pleased." Indeed, it seems perfectly clear that the popular view requires us to believe in the final loss of the vast majority of our race. For it is only the truly converted in this life (as it asserts) who reach Heaven; and it is beyond all fair question, that of professing Christians only a small portion are truly converted; to say nothing of the myriads and myriads of those who have died in Paganism. But even waiving this point, the objections to the popular creed are in no way really lightened by our belief, as to the relative numbers of the lost and the saved. The real difficulty consists in the infliction of any such penalty, and not in the number who are doomed to it. Nor need we forget how inconceivably vast must be that number, on the most lenient hypothesis. Take the lowest estimate; and when you remember the innumerable myriads of our race who have

passed away—those now living—and those yet unborn—it becomes clear that the number of the lost must be something in its vastness defying all calculation; and of these, all, be it remembered, children of the great Parent—all made in His image—all redeemed by the life blood of His dear Son; and all shut up for ever and ever (words, of whose awful meaning, no man has, or can have, the very faintest conception) in blackness of darkness, in despair, and in the company of devils.

6. Let me next shew what this Hell of the popular creed really means, so far as human words can dimly convey its horrors, and for this purpose I subjoin the following extracts—one from a Roman Catholic divine, one from Dr. Pusey, and one from Mr. Spurgeon. "Little "child, if you go to Hell there will be a devil "at your side to strike you. He will *go on* "*striking* you every minute *for ever and ever* "without stopping. The first stroke will make "your body as bad as the body of Job, "covered, from head to foot, with sores and "ulcers. The second stroke will make your "body twice as bad as the body of Job. The "third stroke will make your body three times "as bad as the body of Job. The fourth stroke "will make your body four times as bad as the "body of Job. How, then, will your body be "after the devil has been striking it every "moment for a hundred million of years without

"stopping." Perhaps at this moment, seven "o'clock in the evening, a child is just going "into Hell. To-morrow evening, at seven "o'clock, go and knock at the gates of Hell and "ask what the child is doing. The devils will "go and look. They will come back again and "say, *the child is burning.* Go in a week and "ask what the child is doing; you will get the "same answer, *it is burning.* Go in a year and "ask, the same answer comes—*it is burning.* "Go in a million of years and ask the same "question; the answer is just the same—*it is* "*burning.* So if you go for ever and ever, "you will always get the same answer *it is* "*burning in the fire.*"—*The Sight of Hell*, Rev. J. FURNISS, C.S.S.R. "Gather in one, in your "mind, an assembly of all those men or "women, from whom, whether in history or in "fiction, your memory most shrinks, gather in "mind all that is most loathsome, most revolt- "ing * * * conceive the fierce fiery eyes of "hate, spite, frenzied rage, ever fixed on thee, "looking thee through and through with hate "* * * * hear those yells of blaspheming, "concentrated hate as they echo along the lurid "vault of Hell; every one hating every one "* * * Yet a fixedness in that state in "which the hardened malignant sinner dies, "involves, without any further retribution of "GOD, this endless misery."—Sermon by the Rev. E. B. PUSEY, D.D. "When thou diest "thy soul will be tormented alone; that will

"be a Hell for it: but at the Day of Judgment "thy body will join thy soul, and then Thou "wilt have twin Hells, thy soul sweating drops "of blood, and thy body suffused with agony. "In fire, exactly like that we have on earth, "thy body will lie, asbestos like, for ever "unconsumed, all thy veins roads for the feet of "pain to travel on, every nerve a string, on "which the Devil shall for ever play his dia- "bolical tune of Hell's unutterable lament."— Sermon on the *Resurrection of the Dead*, by Rev. C. H. SPURGEON. Awful as are these quotations, I must repeat, that they give no adequate idea at all of the horrors of Hell; for that which is the very sting of its terrors—their unendingness—is beyond our power really to conceive, even approximately: so totally incommensurable are the ideas of time and of eternity.

7. But it will be said, we no longer believe in a material Hell—no longer teach a lake of real fire. I might well ask, on your theory of interpreting Scripture, what right have you so to teach? But let me rather welcome this change of creed, so far as it is a sign of an awakening moral sense. Yet, this plea, in mitigation of the horror your doctrines inspire, cannot be admitted; for when you offer for acceptance a spiritual, rather than a material flame, who is there that cannot see that the real difficulty is the same, whether you suppose man's body burned or his spirit tortured? It may be even maintained, fairly,

that a Hell which torments the higher part, is rather an aggravated than a mitigated penalty.

8. Merely to state this doctrine in any form, is to refute it for very many minds. So deeply does it wound, what is best and holiest in us; indeed, as I shall try to show further on, it is, for all practical purposes, found incredible, even by those who honestly profess to believe it. This terrible difficulty, felt and acknowledged in all ages, has been largely met for the Roman Catholic, by the doctrine of Purgatory, which became developed as the belief in endless torment, gradually supplanted that earlier and better faith, which *alone* finds expression in the two really Catholic and Ancient Creeds, faith in *Everlasting Life*. How immense must have been the relief thus afforded, is evident, when we remember that the least sorrow, however imperfect, the very slightest desire for reconciliation with GOD, though deferred to the last moment of existence, was believed to free the dying sinner from the pains of Hell, no matter how aggravated his sins may have been. Among the Reformed Communions this difficulty was met, no doubt, by a silent incredulity—often unconscious—yet ever increasing, on the part of the great majority; indeed, some divines, have at all times, both in England and on the Continent, openly avowed their disbelief in endless torments. This growing incredulity has found, in our day, open expression, in a remarkable theory, that of Conditional

Immortality (itself a revival of an earlier belief). This doctrine, briefly stated, teaches that man is naturally mortal, that only in JESUS CHRIST is immortality conferred on the righteous—that the ungodly shall be judged, and after due punishment, annihilated.

9. Of this dogma I shall at once say, that, while it degrades man, it fails to vindicate GOD. A writer, whose words I am glad to adopt, speaks of it as "that most wretched and cowardly of all "theories, which supposes the soul to be natur- "ally mortal, and that GOD will resuscitate the "wicked to torment them for a time and then "finally extinguish them. I can see no ground "for this view in Scripture but in mistaken "interpretations, and it does not meet the real "difficulty at all, for it supposes that evil has in "such cases finally triumphed, and that GOD "had no resource but to punish and extinguish "it: which is essentially the very difficulty felt "by the sceptical mind. I have called it cowardly, "for it surrenders the true nobility of man, his "natural immortality, in a panic at an objection, "and like all cowardice, fails in securing safety." —*Donellan Lectures*, p. 31, Rev. Dr. QUARRY. Besides, this theory has evidently the character of a makeshift, an after thought. The conscience has been shocked by the popular creed, and has taken refuge in the first shelter that offered. Men have seen death and destruction repeatedly denounced in the Bible as the sinner's doom, and

they conclude, contrary to the whole spirit of Holy Scripture, that death, in its pages, implies annihilation. But this view is, in the case of the Old Testament, quite unfounded; for earthly destruction is all that the expressions, there relied on, really teach; and in the case of the New Testament is completely inadequate: because, there, death and destruction have a far wider significance, and one far deeper. Nay, as I hope to point out, there is in New Testament usage a deep spiritual connection between death and life; death becomes the path to, and the condition of, life.

10. Another view adopted by a number, probably extremely large, and increasing, differs altogether from that last stated. Those who hold it have had their eyes opened to the fact, that the New Testament contains very many long neglected texts which teach the salvation of all men. They have also learned enough to have their faith gravely shaken in the popular interpretation of the texts usually quoted in proof of endless pain. The theory of conditional immortality fails to satisfy such men. They see that it is altogether unsuccessful in meeting the real difficulty of the popular creed, *i.e.*, the triumph of evil over good, of Satan over the Saviour of man, and therefore over GOD. They perceive, too, the narrow and arbitrary basis on which it rests in appealing to Holy Scripture. And so they decline to entertain it as any solu-

tion of the question, and say, "We are not able "to accept any theory definitely of the future of "man, because we do not see that anything has "been clearly revealed. Enough has been dis- "closed to shew to us that GOD is love, and we "are content to believe, that happen what will, "all will ultimately be shewn to be the result of "love divine."

11. It is impossible to avoid sympathy with much of this view at first sight, but only then; for when closely examined it is seen to be open to the charge of grave ambiguity or far worse. It may mean that in the future GOD will act as a loving human parent would, and then I reply, this is precisely the larger hope. Again, it may mean a very different and very dangerous thing. It may mean that at the last my ideas of right and wrong will undergo a complete change—that the things which I now pronounce with the fullest conviction to be cruel and vile will at that day seem to me righteous and just, and that thus GOD will be fully justified though HE inflict endless torment. But take this statement to pieces and see what it really means. It means, in effect, practical Atheism. It means blank Agnosticism. This is easily shewn. For what this view really tells me is that my deepest moral convictions are wholly worthless, because that which they declare to be cruel and revolting, is right and holy, and will so appear at the last. But if this be so, then I have lost my sole measure of right and wrong.

What is truth or goodness, I know not. Religion, therefore, is impossible. Conscience ceases to be a reliable guide. Revelation is a mere blank, for all revelation pre-supposes the *trustworthiness* of that moral sense to which it is addressed. Thus the above plea, plausible as it seems, is wholly ambiguous, and does in fact lead either to the larger hope or to mere unbelief.

12. In opposition to both these theories stand the views here advocated, which have been always held by some in the Catholic Church, nay, which represent, I believe, most nearly its primitive teaching. These views are, I know, now widely held by the learned, the devout, and the thoughtful in our own and in other Communions. Briefly stated, they amount to this:—That we have ample warrant, alike from reason—from the observed facts and analogies of human life—from our best and truest moral instincts—and from Holy Scripture itself, to entertain a firm hope that GOD our Father's design and purpose is, and has ever been, to save every child of ADAM'S race.

CHAPTER II.

"*THE POPULAR CREED WHOLLY UNTENABLE.*"

"These questions * * educated men and women of all classes "and denominations, are asking, and will ask more and more till "they receive an answer. And if we of the clergy cannot give "them an answer, which accords with their conscience and reason "* * then evil times will come, both for the clergy and the "Christian religion, for many a year henceforth."—CANON KINGSLEY—*Water of Life.*

"The answer which the popular theology has been tendering for "centuries past will not be accepted much longer * * I disclaim "any desire to uphold that theology which I have never aided in "propagating."—Rev. Dr. LITTLEDALE—*Contemporary Review.*

The next step will be to state, more in detail the various considerations that render it impossible to accept the popular view of future punishment. My first appeal shall be to that primary revelation of Himself, which GOD has implanted in the heart and conscience of man. I am merely expressing the deepest and most mature, though often unspoken, convictions of millions of earnest Christian men and women, when I assert, that to reconcile the popular creed, or any similar belief in Hell, with the most elementary ideas of justice, equity, and goodness (not even to mention mercy), is wholly and absolutely impossible. Thus this

belief destroys the *only ground* on which it is possible to erect any religion at all, for it sets aside the primary convictions of the moral sense; and thus paralyses that, by which alone we are capable of religion. If GOD be not good, just, and true, in *the human acceptation of these terms*, then the whole basis of revelation vanishes. For if GOD be not good in our human sense of the word, I have no guarantee that HE is true in our sense of truth. If what is called goodness in GOD in the Bible, should prove to be that which we call badness in man, then how can I be assured that, what is called truth in GOD, may not really be that which in man is called falsehood? Thus no valid communication—no revelation—from GOD to man is possible; for no reliance can, on this view, be placed on HIS veracity.

"We dare not," says the Bishop of London; "Let go the truth, that the holiness, the good-"ness, the justice, the righteousness, which the "eternal moral law imposes on us as a supreme "command, are identical in essential substance "in our minds and in HIS."—*Bampt. Lect.* "*We dare not?*" Why? Precisely because, if we do, the foundations of religion collapse—perishing as the moral order perishes. Mere Scepticism is our sole refuge. We have lost our standard of right and wrong and are wandering in a pathless desert, creedless, homeless, hopeless, mocked all the while by phantoms of virtues

that are probably vices, and of vices that are probably virtues. For let me repeat that if goodness in becoming infinite turns into evil—if infinite love may be consistent with what we call cruelty—then, for aught we know truth may turn into falsehood, justice into flagrant wrong, light into darkness. Yes, we *dare not* let go the truth that in our moral nature we have a true revelation of the divine mind, *i.e.*, that the ideas of right and wrong are in their essence *the same* in our minds and in GOD's—that they are true *universally;* as true beyond the grave as here and now. But if so, then that which so flatly contradicts all our deepest moral convictions, as does the dogma of endless sin and pain (a dogma which, however softened, no imaginable hypothesis can reconcile with either justice or mercy) must be absolutely *false*, and in teaching it we are but libelling GOD.

"All the attempts yet made," says a stern moralist, "to reconcile this doctrine "with divine justice and mercy, are calcu- "lated to make us blush alike for the human "heart that can strive to justify such a creed, "and for the human intellect that can delude "itself into a belief that it has succeeded in such "justification." No less emphatic is the testimony of one who, far beyond others, seemed in his daily life to have caught the spirit of JESUS CHRIST. "Nothing," says the late Gen. GORDON,

"can be *more abject and miserable* than the usual "conception of GOD. * * Imagine to yourself "what pleasure it would be to HIM to burn us or "to torture us. Can we believe any human being "capable of creating us for such a purpose? "Would it shew HIS power? Why HE is "omnipotent. Would it shew HIS justice? "HE is righteous, no one will deny it. We "credit GOD with attributes which are *utterly "hateful to the meanest of men.* * * I say "that christian Pharisees deny CHRIST. * * "A hard, cruel set they are, from high to low. "When one thinks of the real agony one has gone "through in consequence of false teaching, it "makes human nature angry with the teachers "who have added to the bitterness of life."

The popular view to you is familiar, and perhaps you do not realise its true bearing, or the light in which it really presents the *character* of GOD. But consider how this dogma of endless torture must strike an enquirer after GOD, one outside the pale of christianity, but sincerely desirous of learning the truth. There are such men—there are many such. You tell this enquirer that GOD is not Almighty only, but all good; that GOD is indeed love; that GOD is his father. But these terms are words *without any meaning at all*, if they have not their common ordinary sense when applied to GOD. Such a man will say you tell me GOD is good, but what

acts are these you assign to HIM? HE is a father; but HE brings into being myriads of hapless creatures, knowing that there is in store for them a doom unutterably awful. HE calls into existence these creatures, whether they will or no; though the bottomless pit is yawning to receive them, and the flames ready to devour them. The question is not, whether they might have escaped; the real question is, *do they in fact escape*, and *does He know* that they will not escape. And you assure me that this Great Being is Almighty! is love essential! is the parent of every one of these creatures, who are doomed and damned! What *fair* answer do you propose to give to these questions if addressed to you? I may put the question in the words of a well known poet. A lost soul asks—

> "Father of mercies, why from silent earth
> "Didst THOU awake and *curse me into birth?*"

Pressed by the irresistible weight of these arguments, many take refuge in ambiguous phrases, *e.g.*, "Be sure God will do the best HE "can for every man." Ambiguous and empty words, I repeat, as used by the advocates of endless torment. For if they really mean that the *best* an Almighty Being can do for countless myriads of his children is to bestow on them, whether they will or not, an existence, stained with sin from the womb—*knowing* that *in fact* this sin will ripen into endless misery—then such phrases as the above are but so much dust

thrown in our eyes, they are as argument beneath refutation. And if they do not mean this, such pleas are worthless as a defence of the ordinary creed. If endless misery is the certain result, known and foreseen, of calling me into existence, then to force on me the gift of life, is to do for me not the best, but the worst possible.

Others take refuge in the vain assertion that the larger hope implies the escape of the wicked from all punishment, and places the sinner on a level with the saint. Let me once for all reply that no statement can be more unfounded. For the very method of healing the finally impenitent, as taught by the larger hope, is the severity of the divine judgment, is that consuming fire, which must burn up all iniquity. Thus the larger hope is especially *bound to teach* for the obstinate sinner the certainty of retribution, for in GOD'S judgment it sees the mode of cure (see chap. ix.), the mode in which the grace of the Atonement reaches the touched heart. Thus unrepented sin leads to awful future penalty—to penalty proportioned to the guilt of the sinner and continued till he repent.

The larger hope thus not merely accepts, but *emphasises* for the ungodly the dread warning of wrath to come—of the fires of Gehenna—for in these it sees not a wanton revenge, but at once a just retribution and a discipline that heals the obstinate sinner.

Many again seek to mitigate the just horror and loathing which the popular creed inspires, by saying that the torments of Hell are not material but spiritual, and by asserting further (contrary to the plainest teachings of experience) that somehow the majority do really turn to GOD in this life or at the last moment of half conscious existence. Such apologies are in truth the resources of a doomed and perishing dogma! In reply I will only say that it is startling to find able men forgetting that such pleas, were they never so true, do not even touch the central difficulty of the popular creed. For whether our Father *permits* (to use the softest term) the endless misery of countless myriads upon myriads of HIS own children, or of thousands only, whether Hell receives fifty or only five per cent. of the Sons of GOD, of the Brothers of CHRIST JESUS—and again, whether its torments are applied to their bodies or to their spirits, all these are points that, however decided, do not even *touch* the central question, *i.e.*, can evil be stronger than GOD, ever, under any circumstances?—can a Father permit the endless, hopeless, agony of any of HIS children, and look on calmly for ever and ever unmoved by their woes? —can the Bible be mocking us when it teaches a restitution of *all things*, and that a time is coming when there shall be no more pain, but GOD shall be all in all?

Some will, no doubt, say that we have no right to measure GOD'S ways by our private judgments, no right to seem to dictate what HE will or will not, can or cannot, do. I reply that this objection rests on a complete misapprehension. We do not presume to discuss what GOD, in the abstract, can or cannot do, still less to dictate to HIM. The argument employed in these pages is open to no such objection as the above, for it is simply this—that GOD has both in his primary revelation of HIMSELF to our moral sense, and in HIS written word, distinctly and emphatically declared against the doctrine of endless torment. Because GOD has so spoken, we therefore speak.

Others again assert that endless misery is sufficiently accounted for by saying that it comes as the natural result of sin, and not as arbitrarily decreed. I am wholly unable to see how this in the very least alters the divine promise to restore all things, or annuls the work of CHRIST, which is to "put away sin by the sacrifice of HIMSELF." Surely the more *natural* the tie between sin and misery, the more assured is the destruction of both, for the closer the bond, the more certain it becomes that to put away, *i.e.*, to abolish (Heb. ix. 26) the one is to abolish the other.

But probably the way in which most people satisfy their own minds, when doubts arise, as to the endless nature of future torment is this. "Endless pain and torment is but the result of

"sin freely chosen, and finally persisted in by "the sinner," it is said. Now, let us look more closely at this statement, and see what it really means. Doubtless, all will admit that GOD is Almighty; that GOD is all true; that GOD is all good; that HE is, in short, infinite in power, in truth, and in goodness. But when you tell me that it is possible for the human will to resist the divine, you are, in fact, denying each of these divine attributes. You deny that GOD is Almighty, for you make man's will stronger than HIS. You deny GOD'S veracity, for HE has over and over asserted, that to HIM every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess. You deny GOD'S infinite goodness, for the obstinate and final choice of evil, by any of HIS creatures, is a triumph of evil over good.

But even were it true that man's will can defy and overcome GOD, that fact would form no defence of the popular creed. If endless torment be cruel and hateful, and endless sin repugnant to every conception of GOD, you do not alter the essential character of these facts by any possible theory as to the power of the human will. Indeed the difficulties of the popular creed would be, as we shall see, aggravated, rather than lessened, by claiming for man a freedom to defeat GOD'S purposes. As the point is important let us see whether any such unrestrained freedom can be claimed for man. And first, is it not

strange that this claim to be independent of GOD, to defy HIS control, is made for man, in one direction only, *i.e.*, precisely when and where it may do to him irreparable mischief. We cannot add so much as a cubit to our statue, cannot determine so much as the length of an eyelash. We cannot of ourselves take a single step heavenwards. But we can, on this theory, take as many steps hellwards as we please. We cannot save ourselves, but we can damn ourselves.

But next, it obviously follows that if man is in this sense free, *God is not free.* GOD, as we know from HIS word, wills the salvation of every man, and if HE cannot because of man's will, effect this purpose, then HE is not free. He wills but His will is useless to save; it is fettered and bound. And what is this but a virtual denial of the true GOD? Whoever such a being may be He is not the GOD of the Bible. To the very essence of GOD it pertains to be sovereign and supreme.

"I appeal to the tribunal of a sovereign judge," says Canon WESTCOTT—"whose will is right and whose *will must prevail.*"—*Hist. Faith* p. 37. And again, "It is enough for us to acknowledge "the supreme triumph of divine love from first "to last—one will of one GOD reconciling the "world to HIMSELF in JESUS CHRIST HIS only "SON."—*Ib.* p. 67. "I am obliged to believe," says MAURICE, "that we are living in a restored order.

"I am sure that restored order will be carried out "by the full triumph of GOD's loving will."—*Life* ii. 19. These words sum up the teaching of Scripture. For the Bible, while recognising in man a power of choice, so that no one is saved against his will, but by GOD's working in him a good will, yet points distinctly to GOD's will as supreme, as certain finally to prevail. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my "pleasure.—*Ps.* xlvi., 10. He doeth according to "HIS will in the armies of heaven and among "the inhabitants of earth."—*Dan.* iv. 35. "Whatever the LORD pleased, that did HE, in "heaven and on earth.—*Ps.* cxxxv. 7.

Nay, Scripture goes farther still. It tells us plainly that man has been made "subject to "vanity (sin and imperfection), *not willingly*, but "by reason of HIM who hath subjected the same "in hope."—*Rom.* viii. 20. Again, "GOD hath "shut up all unto disobedience that He might "have mercy upon all."—*Rom.* xi. 32. Notice how fatal are these passages to the dream of man's will thwarting GOD, and the sadder dream of an endless hell *for any*. For, "who hath resisted "His will?" And so of salvation we are plainly told that it is "*not of Him who willeth*, but of "GOD who sheweth mercy." He "worketh all "things according to the counsel of HIS own "will." It is HE "that worketh in us both to "will and to do."

To say that man can defy with success the sovereign will of GOD (whose will and counsel is to save all men) is at once to reject Holy Scripture, and HIM who is its author. To deny the supremacy of HIS will is, in plain terms, to deny His existence.

And that which Scripture so plainly affirms, the very idea of redemption implies. For redemption is either an empty sound or it implies setting free the will of man, *i.e.*, bringing it into harmony with GOD'S will. "The bondage I groan under "is a bondage of the will and that has led me "to acknowledge GOD as *emphatically the* "*redeemer of the will* * * but if of my will then "of all wills."—F. D. MAURICE. Hence is evident the fallacy of the plea we are discussing, *viz.*, "That men go to Hell because they freely "choose evil and persist in so choosing it for ever." For I have just shewn that this assertion begs the whole question, by assuming contrary to Scripture (and no less to reason) that man is able successfully, to defy GOD'S will, *i.e.*, that GOD is not supreme; that there is a virtual dualism.

I may sum up briefly, by saying of this plea that it, as has been shewn (*a*) contradicts the plain teaching of Scripture, (*b*) contradicts the very idea of redemption, (*c*) contradicts the very idea of GOD as supreme, and as free; and so denies GOD. Further let me proceed to shew that it (*d*) con-

tradicts itself, and that (*e*) even if true it would but aggravate the difficulties of the popular creed; I say then that it is self-contradictory; for to assert that because of man's freedom he can go on for ever choosing evil, is, in fact, to plead not for human freedom, but for servitude, the basest, the most degrading. Take the assertion to pieces and it comes to this. To preserve man's dignity he must be permitted to become the slave of evil if he will, the associate of devils for ever!—to secure his prerogative of freedom he must be allowed to sink into hopeless servitude to sin! What would you say were an earthly father to reason thus?—I will permit my child to become a hopeless drunkard for the sake of preserving his sobriety—I will permit my daughter to sink into vice for the sake of preserving her chastity.

Further, this pleading for endless sin in hell on the ground that it is freely chosen by man, would, if true, but enhance the great difficulty of the popular creed—the victory of evil—for plainly, the more free on man's part, the more wilful his choice of sin, so much the more complete is the triumph of evil—so much the more absolute the failure of the cross. What is this plea but in fact seeking to vindicate the Almighty by laying stress on His defeat, seeking to justify Omnipotence by emphasising His impotence?

An important question remains. Admitting that man is free, in what sense, to what extent is

he free? Take once more the solemn words from which no appeal lies. "God hath shut up all unto "disobedience," no choice allowed, no appeal permitted. Thus it is literally true of every man's present state, that he enters into life "halt "and maimed" by his Creator's design. Hence, the only condition of true freedom for man is the divine control. The paradox is true—constraint of man's will is his emancipation. "If the Son "make you free then are ye free indeed." To plead against this constraint of the divine grace, as annulling human freedom, would be as wise as it would be on the part of the friends of some fever-stricken patient, to object to the restraints of the sick room and the physician.

Thus on the highest authority we know that man steps on the stage of life "*shut up* unto dis- "obedience." Let us next see what the admitted facts of life testify as tothe amount of freedom permitted to man. In the first place he can exercise no choice at all as to the time and place of his birth, facts all important in deciding his religious belief and through that his character—no choice as to the many and very complex hereditary influences moulding his entire life though most often he knows it not, nay affecting for good or for evil every thought, every word, every act of his.

Further, man can exercise no choice at all, as to the strength of that will he receives; no choice

at all, as to the circumstances that surround him in infancy and childhood, and which colour his whole life; no choice at all as to the original weakness of his nature, and its inherent tendency to evil. More, still, he can exercise no choice at all, on this *vital* question, whether he will or will not have laid on him the awful perils, in which, on the popular view, the mere fact of life involves him. You tell me of the terrible risks of human life, of its infinite responsibilities; you are fond of enlarging on the taint of original sin, on our inability to help ourselves. True, but what does all this prove? surely this, that a good Being would not have bestowed such a gift, except with a purpose, clear and definite, that all should issue in good. "Nothing," says Bishop NEWTON, "is more contrariant to the divine nature and "attributes, than for GOD to bestow existence on "any being, whose destiny HE fore-knows must "terminate in wretchedness without recovery." —*Final State of Man.*

"Let us take an illustration that we may see this "more clearly. A frail and narrow bridge swings "across a gulf, fearful and fathomless. On this, as it "rocks wildly in the winds, a father places his young "child. Beyond, on the other side of the gulf, "he has placed a prize beyond estimate, which "he promises to the child if he passes the bridge "safely, and then compels him to go, command- "ing him to look neither to the right nor

"left. * * The boy, heedless and disobedient,
"hesitates, reels, the bridge quivers for a moment,
"swings from under him, and hurled into the gulf
"he is caught and impaled on a sharp rock down
"the abyss. There he hangs for long and weary
"years, agonizing and writing in torture, and
"crying to his father for help and deliverance.
"But his father turns a deaf ear to all his
"entreaties, wholly indifferent to the horrible
"sufferings of his child, and justifies himself by
"saying, the boy might have passed the bridge
"safely, he was warned and he suffers justly."
Now, would not all men and angels pronounce this father a monster and a fiend? And shall GOD place me on the frail and narrow bridge of life, stretched over the awful and flaming abyss of endless perdition, with the possibility of a heaven beyond, and then leave me there to cross it, swinging fearfully in the winds of temptation, knowing that as a matter of fact I shall, in crossing, be precipitated into the horrible pit, there to lie for ever, in hopeless agony? A well-known poet put the plea thus, in the form of an address to GOD—

"And canst thou then look down from perfect bliss
"And see me plunging in this dark abyss,
"*Calling thee father in a sea of fire,*
"*Or pouring blasphemies at thy desire?*

Yes, the question is essentially this, and no argument can evade this enquiry:—Is GOD good, and is HE a just GOD, as men use these terms, or

is HE not? Indeed, if the GOD we worship be not good, as we call goodness, it were better for us not to worship HIM at all; better for us to worship nothing at all, than to worship an evil deity. But the popular view represents GOD as doing that which the most degraded human being would not do. "This view," says the Rev. Dr. LITTLEDALE, "puts GOD on a moral level with "the devisers of the most savagely malignant "revenge known to history."—*Cont. Review.*

To this in fact it comes, that the popular view, while admitting GOD's power and goodness to be infinite, yet teaches that evil shall ultimately prevail—a position obviously untenable, and indeed absurd. "Order and right *cannot but* "*prevail* finally, in a universe under HIS govern- "ment."—BUTLER'S *Analogy.* For argue as you please, refine, explain away, it continues still an *insuperable* difficulty, on the popular view, or any mere modification of it, that the Devil is victor and triumphs over GOD and goodness. It is nothing at all to the purpose to allege, either that those who perish finally have chosen evil of their own will, or that all evil beings are shut up in chains and torment: it is the very permanence of evil in any shape: its continued presence—*no matter from what cause*—that constitutes the triumph of the Evil One.

"To suppose," says Canon WESTCOTT, "That

"evil once introduced into the world is for ever, "appears to be at variance with the essential con- "ception of GOD as revealed to us."—*Hist. Faith.* I repeat that if evil be as strong as GOD, as enduring as GOD himself, there is no escape from the conclusion that you proclaim in so teaching, the triumph of the Evil One. You are proclaiming, not the catholic faith, but a dualism. You blot from the faith of Christendom its fundamental article, "I believe in *one* GOD the Father *Almighty*. What are all heresies, all errors, that have stained the Church of GOD, compared with this supreme heresy, this dualism, which seats evil on the throne of the universe, a power enduring as GOD himself? The torments, physical and mental, of the popular hell, awful as they are, recede into almost nothing as compared with the far more awful spectacle of GOD vanquished, of GOD trying to save but failing, and watching HIS children as they slowly sink beneath the endless sway of Satan; of GOD'S Son returning, not in triumph, but in defeat, of the Cross shattered, prostrate, paralysed.

Again, so revolting to our moral nature is the popular creed, that it, more than any other cause, as has been said, produces the most wide-spreading unbelief. "Compared with this," remarks J. S. MILL, "all objections to Christianity sink into "insignificance." Let me speak plainly. Too long—far too long—have the clergy been silent;

content to complain of a scepticism, of which a doctrine they continue to teach (without, I believe in many cases, more than a languid and traditional acceptance of it) is a main cause. And as this doctrine is the parent of unbelief at home, so abroad in the mission field it is a grevious hindrance to the spread of the gospel. The very heathen are shocked by a dogma more cruel and horrible than anything of which they have ever heard; the more so when they are asked to receive this awful teaching as good news! I repeat that no thoughtful man can believe a doctrine condemned by the conscience, and so men will seek a refuge in scepticism, when they hear the clergy teaching these evil traditions (for they are no more) as part of the revelation of that GOD whose blessed SON tasted death for every man. Yes, the peculiar horror of the popular creed is, that it sets up evil as an object of worship—of reverence —of love.

I invite you here to consider a weighty and solemn fact. Amid the crowd of sins there stands out one in sad preeminence because it has not forgiveness "for the age," *eis ton aiona*, its forgiveness demands ages—demands a period indefinitely long. Now, from our LORD'S own words we may understand in what lay the essence of this awful sin. It lay in confounding the good and evil spirit, in ascribing to the one the works of the other. If then any one whose conscience

whispers, that endless misery can only be inflicted by an evil being, on his own children, still persists in ascribing its infliction to GOD, does not such an one incur sad and awful risk of committing this greatest of all sins? I invite your earnest attention to this. Does your conscience say I cannot reconcile this awful doctrine with any idea I can form of love, of justice, or of goodness, and yet I believe it? If so, then beware lest in ascribing such things to GOD, you come perilously near to, if indeed you are not guilty of this sin, which is of all sins the greatest (known in the popular creed, as the unpardonable sin).

Yes, the question of all questions is, is GOD indeed love, is the gospel really good news, not possible but *actual*, real glad tidings? All around us, thoughtful men are more than ever reflecting on these points; what answer do you propose to give? They are thus enquiring—pondering—of themselves, of their lot, of their hopes and fears in the future:—I find myself in this world (so run their thoughts); on me are laid, *whether I will or no*, the awful responsibilities of time and of eternity. At my entrance on life I received not a nature upright, but one already fallen, and that for no fault of mine; stained, and that with no sin of mine. And to this nature so weak, so fallen, so helpless, come, in every variety, temptations, wiles, and allurements such that no man has wholly withstood, or can withstand, their

subtle power. Now, if this be a part of my probation, if it be a path to better things, I can in submission—nay, in gladness even—bend to my Creator's will: I can take courage, and though faint, still pursue the narrow path that leads to life. But how can I believe that a loving Creator —all powerful as HE is all good—does so arrange, does so permit, that, for any one soul, this sad and fallen estate of human nature shall prove but the portal to endless woe? So men reason. I do not wonder, I rejoice, that they have ceased to believe, that a divine parent can do that, which an earthly parent could not do without eternal infamy. For next imagine any degree of folly and sin, that can stain human nature, to be accumulated on the head of some sinful child of man; and I ask, can you believe that any human father, any mother, that once loved that child, could bring herself calmly to sentence her offspring to an endless Hell; nay, herself to keep that child there in anguish that never shall terminate?

Take next a clear exposure of the popular creed from another point of view. Look at this plain fact. CHRIST, we know from the Bible is the Saviour of the world. HE is, therefore, on the popular view, the Saviour of those whom in fact HE does not save. This evidently follows. But this principle once admitted, it is wholly immaterial, as a matter of reasoning, what the

percentage of the lost may be. Although out of the countless myriads of our race but a few hundreds were saved, GOD would still *save every man.* Indeed, though *not even one solitary soul* were saved, GOD would still, on the principle popularly held, save *every* man. For that principle is this, that to offer salvation, though the offer come to nothing, is to save. Hence it undoubtedly follows that GOD might be the Saviour of the whole race of men, *though not one soul were in fact saved.* All might be *saved* on this principle, though all were in fact *damned!*

But there is a further difficulty in the way of the popular creed. Who are those whom it represents as finally unsaved?—the finally impenitent, the most obstinate sinners. And what is that but to say, in so many words, that those precisely whose case furnished the strongest reason for the SAVIOUR'S mission, are unsaved? Admit their guilt, recognise as we do to the very utmost the need and the certainty of retribution, the awful consequences of sin persisted in, still, when all this has been said, it remains true that CHRIST came to save the "lost," and if so, the more "lost" any are, the more CHRIST came to seek and to save them. Thus on the ordinary view, precisely those for whom CHRIST especially came receive no salvation, those whose claims are strongest perish, those whose claims on a SAVIOUR are weakest, are rescued. Let us apply this con-

sideration to a plea often used to disguise, if that may be, the awful fact of endless torment by teaching that but few, comparatively, will share this horrible lot. Elsewhere (p. 5), I have shewn the futility of this plea, but here I desire to press this aspect of the case, that these few are precisely those, whose case appeals most of all to a SAVIOUR. HE came to save *sinners* (emphatically sinners). Am I to read the passage thus? —He came to save all sinners *except the greatest.*

But further, there is this most grave difficulty; all sin, be it never so black (and GOD forbid that I should even seem to weaken its blackness), is but finite. Yet, for these finite sins, you tell me, an infinite punishment is the due penalty. But finite and infinite are wholly incommensurable terms. Have you ever set yourself seriously to realise what punishment, protracted *for ever and ever* indeed means? In fact the idea of illimitable time mocks our utmost efforts to grasp it. "The imagination can come to a stand nowhere "or ever. On the mind goes, heaping up its "millions and billions and quadrillions of "millions. It is to no purpose, time without a "beginning—without an end—still confronts it. "As thus thought of, the mind recoils from the "contemplation, horrified, paralysed with terror. If we grasp never so faintly the idea of what an *infinite* punishment means, it becomes clear that no proposition more revolting to the idea of

justice can be stated, than this, that finite sins deserve an infinite penalty. Expand the finite as you will, and it still falls infinitely short of infinity. Hence, it is but the sober statement of sober fact, to assert, that a single sentence of unending torment would outweigh the *whole sins* of the *whole human race.* To prove this I need but assume that, to which every conscience responds, that what is finite can in justice receive only a finite punishment. But any possible number of finite sins put together will still fall short (nay, infinitely short) of infinity—of infinite guilt.* Add together all sins ever committed, be their blackness what it may, be their horrors never so great; still the sum of all, because the guilt of finite mortals, is but finite, and unless all justice is to be outraged, would deserve a sentence that, however awful, would be finite. Hence it follows that a single sentence of *infinite misery* would, undoubtedly, outweigh, if there be such a thing as justice, the sins of all men, who have ever lived.

Further, it is said—for what have not men said, at what straw have they not grasped, in vain attempts to support a doctrine that each day crumbles under their touch!—it has actually been

* If, it is said, that there may be some infinite evil in sin, that, even if true (which nobody knows and Scripture nowhere teaches), does not make human guilt infinite. For on any just principle, guilt is determined by the capacities and powers of the agent, and all these are in man strictly finite.

argued that a sin is infinite, because committed against an infinite being: so that, I suppose, to rob a nobleman would be a greater crime, morally, than to deprive a beggar of his last penny?

Again, it is said, that perhaps the flames of Hell may be needed to terrorize some far distant sinful orb; that rebels against GOD in some other planet, may read, by the light of Hell-fire, the dangers of sin. Yes, it has been gravely alleged that a Being, whose name is Love, will light, and keep alight through unending ages, a ghastly living torch for such a purpose as this—a torch—each atom of which is composed of a lost soul, once HIS child, once made in HIS image, once redeemed by the Cross of HIS dear Son! You know this has been taught, and yet you actually complain that men are sceptical, and that thoughtful artisans reject such a creed with scorn.

And let us not forget how much this belief has fostered in man a spirit of cruelty. It is sad, but true, to recollect how much of the suffering inflicted by man, on his brother man, has been due, directly or indirectly, to the belief in Hell. How many ghastly fires has it not helped to light up here on earth, each containing a living, agonizing human being, often thus punished for a trifling error in creed? For if men believed that GOD would light up the gloomy fires of Hell

and keep them blazing to all eternity, it was an easy and a natural step, to set up in His name a little copy of His justice, and thus, as it were, to anticipate God's sentence. "As the souls of "heretics are hereafter to be eternally burning in "Hell," such was the reasoning of Queen Mary in defence of her awful persecution, "there can "be nothing more proper than for me to imitate "the divine vengeance, by burning them here on "earth." I say, that however familiar this may be, it is necessary to ponder well the sad facts, for, by awaking a righteous horror and indignation, we may often most effectually combat such dogmas. And more must be said, not alone have the popular doctrines done all this, but they have greatly influenced for evil the general course of human legislation, and human thought. You may assuredly find traces of the baneful influence of a belief in Hell-fire, in a spirit of cruelty infused into many laws once current, now, and justly, abhorred by all. Nay, it has indeed poisoned the very fount of pity and love, by representing Him, whose we are, and before whom we bow, as calmly looking on, during the endless cycles of eternity, at the agony of myriads upon myriads of His creatures.

But further, it must be added, that by this shocking creed the moral tone is lowered all round, wherever it is accepted. Men are by it familiarized with the idea of suffering and sin as permanent

facts. They have even in some sort learned to consider Heaven as dependant upon the belief in an eternal Hell. Nay, I will say, that even the holiest men believing the popular creed are unconsciously depraved, morally and spiritually. You will find for instance, one so holy and so revered as KEBLE, pleading (see hymn for second Sunday in Lent) for endless torment, on the ground that if this were not true, then endless bliss in Heaven would also not be true. To put it plainly, he would, as I understand his words, purchase Heaven's unending bliss at the terrible cost of the endless, hopeless, torture of the lost! Here I will only say, that I know not whether his logic, or his moral tone be more unsound. Do but for the moment compare the spirit of KEBLE with, I will not say the spirit of CHRIST, but with that of ST. PAUL, who wished himself accursed from CHRIST, if thereby he could save his brethren! As to KEBLE'S argument, that will be fully answered in considering, in a later chapter, *St. Matthew* xxv. 46. Meantime, as a further illustration, I copy the following from a periodical lying before me:—"I was talking the "other day with a very learned Catholic ecclesi- "astic, who told me that he had been called on "to give the last sacraments to a poor Irishman. "He found his penitent with some free-thinking "friend, who was arguing that there was no "Hell. The dying Celt raised himself up with "much indignation; 'no Hell,' he exclaimed,

"'then where is the poor man's *consolation?*'"

And this difficulty goes further still: for we cannot suppose that the saints in Heaven are without any memory of the past. Even DIVES, in the flames of Hades, remembers with pity his brethren. But unless you make the impossible supposition, that the blessed lose all memory in Heaven, then they must either suffer *keenly* at the thoughts of the torments of the dear ones lost in Hell, and tormented for ever and ever: or they must be on a *lower level*, morally and spirtually, than was even DIVES: choose which alternative you please. To this dilemma I see no answer. If the blessed sympathise with the torments of the lost, can they enjoy even a momentary happiness? If they fail to sympathise, are they not sunk in selfishness and debased? Or shall we say that GOD actually maims HIS redeemed, depriving them of knowledge and memory, lest they should miss their lost ones? On this view GOD'S ways are so awful that if known they would wither up the very joys of Heaven, and so HE shuts out pity and wraps the blessed in a mantle of selfish ignorance.

Such is the Heaven of the ordinary creed; if it be not something worse still, an exulting over the torments of the lost. To show that this is no mere figure of speech, I append a few extracts. They are from sources so widely apart as a medieval schoolman, and a modern puritan.

"That the saints may *enjoy* their beatitude more "thoroughly, and give more abundant thanks for "it to GOD, *a perfect sight* of the punishment of "the damned is granted them."—*St. Thomas—Summa* iii. Take another instance from PETER LOMBARD, "Therefore the elect shall go forth to "see the torments of the impious, seeing which "they will not be grieved, but will be *satiated* "*with joy* at the sight of the *unutterable* calamity "of the impious."—*Senten.* iv. 50. Again hear another from a modern divine, "The *view of the* "*misery of the damned* will *double* the ardour of "the love and gratitude of the saints in Heaven." This is the opinion of the once famous JONATHAN EDWARDS. Another American divine uses even stronger language. "This display of the divine "character," said S. HOPKINS, "will be most "*entertaining* to all who love GOD—will give "them the *highest* and *most ineffable pleasure.* "*Should the fire of this eternal punishment cease,* "*it would in a great measure obscure the light of* "*Heaven, and put an end to a great part of the* "*happiness and glory of the blessed.*"—*Works,* vol. iv. *Serm.* xiii. To this the popular creed has degraded the ministers of CHRIST, to penning passages like the above (easily to be multiplied) —passages, than which all literature does not contain anything more revolting. I must ask you, as a relief from these truly fearful words, to read the following touching picture (not this time from an ecclesiastical source) :—

What if a soul redeemed, a spirit that loved
While yet on earth, and was beloved in turn,
And still remembered every look and tone
Of that dear earthly sister, who was left
Among the unwise virgins at the gate:
Itself admitted with the bridegroom's train,—
What if this spirit redeemed, amid the host
Of chanting angels, in some transient lull
Of the eternal anthem, heard the cry
Of its lost darling, whom in evil hour
Some wilder pulse of nature led astray,
And left an outcast in a world of fire,
Condemned to be the sport of cruel fiends,
Sleepless, unpitying, masters of the skill
To wring the maddest ecstasies of pain,
From worn-out souls that only ask to die,—
Would it not long to leave the bliss of Heaven,
Bearing a litttle water in its hand,
To moisten those poor lips that plead in vain,
With Him we call our Father?

O. W. HOLMES.—*The Poet at the Breakfast Table.*

Nor have I yet done with this point. I say next that the popular creed does *in fact* teach men to think lightly of sin. This seems a paradox, and no doubt you wonder: but consider for a moment what the fact is. Tell me, that GOD will permit an eternal Hell, with its miserable population of the lost, to go on sinning to all eternity; and what idea is it you really convey to me? It is, I reply, *toleration of sin. Have you ever thought of this?* "Nothing so effectually "teaches men to bear with sin as the popular "creed, because we profess to believe that GOD "will bear with it for ever." Further, I say that

the practical effect of the ordinary creed is to teach men to think lightly of sin in a very large class of cases, *e.g.*, where a careless or ungodly life has been lived, and no apparent repentance has marked the closing scene. For to those who believe that the few days or moments remaining of life on a sick bed, are the sole period in which salvation is possible, how irresistible must be the temptation to patch up a hollow peace, to accept anything in lieu of a genuine repentance. And so not the thoughtless, but teachers grave and holy —*e.g.*, Dr. PUSEY—do in fact, as they endeavour to escape the awful difficulties of the ordinary creed, lay stress on the possibility or probability of men leading a wicked life, up to the very last moment of existence, and in that last moment receiving the divine grace. Can any teaching be at once more repugnant to all experience, and more likely to cause the young and the careless to make light of sin?

On the other hand, it is, I believe, often precisely those who most deeply feel the taint and evil of sin who reject most completely the popular creed; for in proportion to their horror at sin, is the depth of their conviction, that sin cannot go on for ever. There is, too, this further question, if sin is to endure for ever in Hell, must it not increase and go on increasing through all eternity? Think to what point of horror the accumulated sin of the myriads of the lost will

have reached, when even a few of the cycles of eternity are over: and this vast and inconceivable horror and taint is to go *on*, and *on*, and *on*, for *ever*, and *ever*, and *ever increasing*, under the rule of HIM who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity! "Think how grotesque a parody of "the divine justice it is to say, as the popular "creed does, that GOD requires obedience and "righteousness here, but if he cannot have these, "HE will be satisfied with endless disobedience "and sin hereafter as a substitute. We are "gravely told that if the wrong be not righted "within a specified time, justice will be satisfied "to increase the wrong infinitely, and perpetuate "it to all eternity." I repeat, that the powers of imagination, if taxed to the utmost, could not conceive any more ludicrous parody of justice than the above!

There is again, a difficulty—an impossibility rather—in reconciling the popular creed with the view, which either Holy Scripture or reason give of punishment—its object and nature. Apart from all question of its justice—apart, too, from the horror it excites—endless, hopeless torment, is a useless, and therefore a wanton, infliction: it is a mere barbarity, because it is only vindictive, and in no sense remedial. There is something positively sickening, in the thought of the uselessness of penalty prolonged, when all hope of amendment is over, and when retribution has

been fully exacted. To go on punishing for ever, simply for punishment sake, shocks every sentiment of justice. And the case is so much the worse when, as remarked, the punishment is really the prolongation of sin, when it is but keeping evil alive, making sin endless.

But punishment is, on any true theory, no less remedial than vindictive, nay, is essentially remedial and corrective. Our day has seen a complete revolution in the ideas men form of punishment and its end: in few things has the advance been more marked over the past, than in our recognition of the true object of penalty. Not that mere pain is looked on as necessarily remedial, but with the penalty, we now seek to combine corrective influences; the whole spirit of punishment has been altered with the change in men's minds, and a higher tone now everywhere prevails. But let me ask, *to whom* is due this marked change for the better, in our ideas of punishment? Surely to that Great Being who guides and orders by HIS providence all human things! This being so, it is wholly incredible to assign to the divine punishments, this very character of mere vindictiveness, which men have in all enlightened systems abandoned. This is, I repeat, impossible to believe, for when GOD chastises it is *for our profit*, as the Bible says. HE punishes, as an old Father puts it, *medicinally*. Yes, it is impossible

to believe the ordinary dogma, for if GOD does indeed by HIS providence—by HIS Spirit—direct and enlighten men's minds, leading them to higher and truer thoughts on this subject (as on all others), then to suppose that HIS own punishments are regulated on the very system, which HE has taught us to abandon, is truly impossible.

Nor can I close this subject without remarking that there is a highly significant expression found in that very passage, most often on the lips of the defenders of endless pain, which yet, curiously enough, furnishes the material for an answer to their creed: I speak of *St. Matthew* xxv. 46. The term there applied to the punishment of the ungodly is not the ordinary Greek word to denote penalty, but it is a term (*Kolasis*) denoting, literally, *pruning*, *i.e.*, a corrective chastisement—an age-long (but reformatory) punishment. Surely the choice of this particular word, to designate the future suffering of the ungodly, is full of significance: unless, indeed, any one should prefer to think that *chance* dictated its selection in this inspired sentence. Nor is this to deny the retributive character of punishment. It is merely to assert. that while punishment is truly *retributive*, its paramount end is not this, but the higher aim of amending by chastisement. (See the remarks on GOD's judgments in chapter ix.)

CHAPTER III.

"*THE POPULAR CREED WHOLLY UNTENABLE.*"

"Far be it from me to make light of the demerit of sin. But endless "punishment—I admit my inability (I would say it reverently) to "admit this belief together with a belief in the Divine goodness—"the belief that GOD is Love, that HIS tender mercies are over all "HIS works."—JOHN FOSTER on *Future Punishment.*

Pursuing our remarks, I must also remind you of another feature of the popular belief, which seems to present a great difficulty; it is what I must call its paltriness, its poorness. Let us for the moment, not think of GOD as a good, loving, and righteous Being. Let us now simply regard HIM as great, as irresistible, as almighty. Viewed thus, how difficult is it to accept that account which the ordinary creed gives us of this Being's attempt at the rescue of HIS fallen creature man. An Almighty Being puts forth every effort to gain a certain end; sends inspired men to teach others: works miracles, signs, wonders in Heaven and on earth, all for this end of man's safety; nay, at the last, sends forth HIS own SON—very GOD—HIMSELF Almighty. The Almighty SON stoops not alone to take our nature on HIM, but

lower still—far lower—stoops to degradation; meekly accepts insult and scourging, bends to the bitter cross even, and all this to gain a certain end. And yet, they tell us, this end is not gained after all, man is not saved, for countless myriads are in fact left to hopeless, endless misery; and that though for *every one of these lost ones*, so to speak, has been shed the life blood of GOD'S own SON. Now, if I may be permitted to speak freely, it is wholly inconceivable that the definite plan of an Almighty Being should end in failure—that this should be the result of the agony of the eternal SON.

And continue this thought. If we think of GOD at all worthily, we cannot help thinking of HIM as working for high and worthy ends. Therefore we cannot help thinking of HIM, as in creation, working for some end worthy of HIMSELF. But what end does the popular creed assign to HIM? A creation, broken, marred, mutilated, ruined, and so to continue for ever. A creation ending in misery, pain, woe unutterable, to infinite numbers of the created; and all this misery and horror brought into sharper relief by a vain and fruitless attempt to save all: by a purpose of love declared to all, and yet not in fact reaching all: a creation which is the portal for one half, or more of the created to Hell! And you gravely ask thoughtful enquirers, to believe this; to believe that for such an end, and con-

templating these horrors destined never to cease, the morning stars are described as singing together, and all the sons of GOD *shouting for joy* on the morning of creation.

The sons of GOD shouted for joy, as they contemplated creation; but they should have wept had the popular creed been true. For that creed represents the present life as darkened by the prospect of evil triumphant; our present sorrows made keener by the prospect of a future life, which will be, not to the wicked merely, but to the whole race of man, an evil and a curse—a life which every good man would, if he could, bring to an instant end. To prove this, I will take a definite example. Further, I will concede to the advocates of the popular creed one point of very considerable importance (to which they have no right) *e.g.*, that the number of the saved greatly exceeds the lost. "Suppose it were offered "to the father of three children to take his choice "whether two should be received into heaven, "and one condemned to hell, or the whole should "be annihilated in death. What would a parent "say? Where is the father who would dare to "secure the bliss of two children at the cost "of the endless misery of one? Which of the "family would he select as the victim, whose "undying pain should secure his brothers' im-"mortal joy? Is there any one living who "would not suffer himself and his children to

"sink back again into nothingness rather than "purchase heaven at such a price? Now if so, "if we should so act in the case of our own "children, *we are bound morally* to make the "same choice with respect to every one. No "*moral* being would consent to purchase eternal "happiness at the price of another's eternal woe. "Hence it follows that a future life, on the "popular view, is an evil to the human race, "*not to the wicked, but to all.* For if annihilation "of the whole race should be tendered as the "alternative, no moral being could, as has been "shewn, refuse to accept it.—BARLOW *on Eternal Punishment.*

Thus, there is, I repeat, if the popular creed be true, no alternative, no escape from the conclusion that creation is an evil thing, and a future life a curse to the *whole human family.* What is to be our answer to the scorn of the Sceptic, to the challenge of the Atheist? So long as we cling to an immoral creed there is none, absolutely none. What awful mockery is a Gospel whose message is, in fact, damnation to countless myriads! whose issue is endless sin, sin ever ripening, ever progressing! And I am to preach such a Gospel as good news! as glad tidings of great joy!! glad tidings of never ending sin and woe and pain and curse!!

But again, there comes this very serious obstacle to accepting the popular creed. I shall

state it thus, either this creed is true or false. If false—the question is ended. If true, can you explain to me this strange fact, that *nobody acts as if he believed it?* I say this, for any man who so believed, and who possesed but a spark of common humanity—to say nothing of charity—could not rest, day or night, so long as one sinner remained who might be saved. To this all would give place: pleasure, learning, business, art, literature; nay, life itself would be too short for the terrible warnings, the burning entreaties, the earnest pleadings, that would be needed to rouse sinners from their apathy, and to pluck them from endless tortures. Ask me what you will, but do not ask me to believe that any human being, who is convinced, that perhaps his own child, his wife, his friend, his neighbour even, is in danger of endless torment, could, if *really* persuaded of this, live as men now live, even the best men. Who can avoid the inevitable conclusion that its warmest adherents really, though unconsciously, find their dogmas absolutely incredible? These remarks explain an obvious difficulty, *viz.*—it has been shewn how the popular creed cuts at the root of all religion, poisoning the very fountains whence we draw our conceptions of love, of righteousness, of truth (pp. 15—20). But if so, it may be fairly asked, how is it that society subsists, that morality is not extinct? Because, I reply, unhesitatingly, because no society, no individual,

can possibly act, or has in fact acted on such a creed, in the real business of life. It is simply impossible: who would dare so much as to smile, if he really believed endless torments were certain to be the portion of some member of his household—it may be of himself? Who would venture to marry less he might become the parent of children who should incur this unspeakable doom? "The world would be *one* "*vast madhouse*," says the American scholar HALLSTED, "if a realising and continued pressure "of such a doctrine was present." Remark again how this doctrine breaks down the moment it is really put to the test. Take a common case: a man dies—active, benevolent, useful in life, but not a religious man, not devout. By the popular creed, such a man has gone to Hell for ever. But who really believes that? nay, instinctively our words grow softer when we speak of the dead in all cases.

Let me next point out a practical difficulty of the gravest kind which arises on the popular view. It is this: how can you on any such principle deal fairly or equitably with the mass of men? Let us speak plainly: do tell me who and what are the great, nay, the *overwhelming* majority of the baptized? They are assuredly neither wholly bad, nor wholly good; they are neither bad enough for Hell, nor good enough for Heaven. Now how can you adopt your theory to this state

of things, which is, I think, quite impossible to deny? Look around you, survey the mass of mankind: of how few, how very few can you affirm that they are truly devout, converted, holy, Christ-like; take which term you please. Can you affirm this of one in ten; in twenty; in a hundred even, of those baptized into JESUS CHRIST? Take as an illustration any English parish you please. Take its entire population, what are they, how many are the really good? Take any village, or select some one of our English towns, muster its whole population in imagination, how many true, holy servants of JESUS CHRIST will you find there? The mass, what are they? Do meet this question, and look the facts straight in the face. What is to be the doom of the mass of baptized Christians—they are not holy, but are they bad? Nobody out of the pulpit—and seldom there in these days—ventures to assert any such thing. Indeed there is abundant good in this crowd of human beings, and still more, there is almost infinite capacity for goodness, amid the evil. Everywhere you will find unselfish parents, hard workers, loving sisters, true friends; everywhere traces, distinct enough amid all the sin, traces in abundance, of goodness, kindness, patience, self-sacrifice, sometimes carried even to great lengths. Let an emergency arise, let sickness come, what devotion does it not call forth—what love unstinted, what self-forgetfulness? Now your system, that which

you call the good news brought from Heaven by JESUS CHRIST, forces you to believe that GOD will consign all these hapless children of HIS, because unconverted, and unrenewed, to a doom which in its lightest form is awful beyond all powers of imagination ; to the company of devils for ever and ever; to darkness unbroken by a single ray of light. Permit me one question more, would not any creed, *anything*, be a positive relief from such *a gospel* as this of yours? Can there be a mockery more solemn, more emphatic, than to call this any part of the glad tidings of great joy? Is it not time for the clergy, not merely in private to ponder these things, convinced or half convinced of their truth, but to speak out as in GOD'S name—as GOD'S ministers?

And while I am speaking of men as they are, and of the life they lead, let me add here a statement of another very grave difficulty in the way of accepting an endless Hell as the doom of any man, the issue of any life. Wherever human beings exist, in what form of community it matters not, in what climate or under what conditions of life soever, there is found everywhere a deep spontaneous belief, call it feeling, instinct, what you please, that connects the marriage tie and the birthday with joyful associations, with mirth and gladness. Now why is this—has it no meaning? So deep an instinct, one so truly natural and spontaneous as this, comes surely from

the CREATOR of all. HIS voice it is that bids the Bridegroom rejoice over the Bride, that bids the heart of the mother overflow with tenderness towards her babe. This being so, again let me put the question, and ask, *why* has this been so ordered? It is GOD who has so ordered; do you think HE has had no purpose in so doing, no message to convey to those who have ears to hear? Is it possible that our Heavenly Father should bid HIS creatures everywhere to rejoice with a special joy at the marriage feast, at the natal hour, if these births were in fact destined to add largely to the ranks of Hell, to the hosts of evil? Do think over the matter calmly, and ask yourself if that is possible, if you can believe any such thing.

And as you think it over, take with you these words of JESUS CHRIST (that hint so much). They remind us how the mother, in the "perilous "birth" hath sorrow; but add that all that sorrow is swallowed up in joy, "joy that a man "is born into the world." Dwell on these words that you may grasp all they convey. Indeed in this lies the whole matter. It is *a joy* that a man —any man—should be born into the world. See how wide the words are! If you tell me, it is but a blind instinct of the mother: yes, I reply, it is this very blindness, as you call it, of the instinct that constitutes its force, for it thus betrays its origin; it is implanted; and by whom? by the

Great Parent, for it is spontaneous and betrays His hand. Do you ask me to believe that He has done this without a meaning, without a certain purpose of good? Can I believe that our Father bids any mother's heart to stir with joy at the sight of her infant, while He knows that this infant is destined to be, will be, in fact, shut up into endless torment?

And again, can you reconcile your theory of endless torment awaiting so large a portion of our race, with that natural thirst for joy, that longing for happiness each one finds within. It matters not whether this has been slowly developed, or created at one stroke, all that matters to this argument is its *naturalness*, its *universality*. This longing for happiness cannot then have been accidental, there must be in it a design on the Creator's part. Now, do say what that design can have been? To delude us, is that possible? "If the popular theory of future endless torment "were true, what sublime mockery would there "be in placing poor wretches first upon earth, "where are heard the merry shouts of careless "children, the joyous song of birds, where above "our heads,

'With constant kindly smile the sleepless stars,
'Keep everlasting watch * * '

"where beneath our feet the delicate beauty of "flowers of every tint gladdens the eye. What "would have been thought of the propriety of

"placing a hundred bright and cheerful objects,
"suggestive of peace and happiness, in the ante-
"room to the torture chamber of the inquisition?
"It deserves to be noted that man, the only
"animal that laughs, has of all animals, according
"to the popular theory, least cause to laugh."

But there is much to be said beyond remarking on our natural thirst, for joy and happiness, and the difficulty of explaining why it was ever implanted in man, except with a design that it should one day be gratified, fully and freely. There is this to be said, there is stored in every man a vast possibility of growth, of expansion, mental and intellectual, no less than spiritual. There are almost infinite germs in man, so to speak; capacities of every sort, latent as yet, but capable of a development, perhaps practically boundless, stored now up within us: they are probably unsuspected by the majority, and it is only at intervals, and as it were by chance, that we gain a passing glance at them. But undoubtedly they exist, and their existence, like that of all other natural facts, requires an explanation. *Why* do they exist—who planted within us these powers, and for what end? And they have been given to all, not to the good merely, but to man as man. I cannot but see in the very fact of their existence a silent prophecy, an intimation that the spark shall not be quenched in any case. Are they not a very message to man from GOD, a *hint*, eloquent

by its very silence, eloquent, and instinct with hope?

Consider next, how strongly the analogy of nature, which is, after all, a very real revelation of GOD, bears against the popular view, which limits to the few moments of our present life all our chances of discipline, amendment, and probation; and that though "all reason, all experience, all "scripture, unite in this, that the Divine work of "teaching goes on behind, as well as before, the "veil." To teach that the mere fact of dying is the signal for a total change from all that has gone before, is to contradict all that we know of GOD'S ways from analogy. Consider this and say whether any view which interposes so wide a gulf, as that commonly held does, between our present and our future life, can be true. In all GOD'S dealings with us no sharp break intervenes between the successive stages of life: each condition of being is developed out of a prior, and closely related stage. Now this being so, can I believe that in another age all this is reversed, and that men, with ample capacities for good still existing, are to be at one bound, consigned to outer darkness, to hopeless sin, to endless torture? And the difficulty (surely an enormous one) of believing that a Parent will deliberately crush out all the lingering tendencies to good in His own children, is increased by the following consideration, viz.:—that the whole of

our human life here is so manifestly incomplete, so incohate, that in very many cases, it has not afforded a satisfactory probation, and in not a few cases, no probation at all.

This thought may be pursued further thus: an old proverb says very wisely, "the mills of "GOD grind *slowly*," and this Divine slowness, or long suffering is very conspicuous in GOD'S ways. How slowly has HE been fitting this earth for man's habitation, and by what a long continued succession of stages, age succeeding age. At length man steps on the earth. Now, is all the Divine slowness to be at once changed—and why should it be? Man is to live for ever and ever: we are apt to forget what this means, and how altogether impossible it is to assign any proportion between the fleeting moments of earthly life, and the eternity that stretches away, for ever and ever. If we compare a human life of average duration to one second of time, and compare eternity to the aggregate of all the seconds that have passed since time was, and that shall pass while time endures, still we assign to human life a proportionate duration infinitely too long. Am I then to believe that the same GOD who expends millions of years, in slowly fitting this earth for man's habitation, will only allow to man himself a few fleeting years, or months, or hours, as it may be, as his sole preparation time for eternity? To settle questions so unspeakably great in their

issue, questions, stretching away to a horizon so far distant, that no power of thought can follow them, in such *hot haste*, does seem quite at variance with our Heavenly Father's ways, with all HE has shewn us of HIS modes of acting. Besides, do but look at the world: far the larger part of its population has not even heard of JESUS CHRIST. Are they—these untold myriads of myriads of hapless creatures—first to hear of CHRIST at the Day of Judgment?

Finally we pass to Holy Scripture. Here we are at once confronted by a difficulty, so grave, that I confess, it to me seems quite decisive against the popular view. This difficulty is, that you are thus forced absolutely to *ignore*, to *suppress* a very large part of the Bible: a very numerous class of passages which clearly hold out a promise of universal restitution, or at least imply a distinct hope for all men. The view generally held is, in short, one-sided, and therefore wholly unfair: it is as though a judge should base a decision of the most weighty importance on one set of witnesses merely, neglecting the others who testify in a directly opposite sense. "Only "imagine the book of nature being studied in "this way, with one class of facts systematically "ignored; with one law, say of gravitation, fully "laid down, while the opposite law of centrifugal "motion was altogether overlooked, what results "in science could follow from such a method?

"Yet this is the way in which not a few yet read
"the Scriptures, taking their first partial sense
"readings for the truth, and shutting their eyes
"to all that the same Scripture testifies on the
"other side."

An interesting illustration of the fact that the New Testament is *full* of passages teaching the larger hope, is furnished by the undoubted, but often unperceived, occurrence over and over again, in the works of those who hold the popular creed, of language, which if fairly understood, imports the salvation of all men. This no doubt arises from the fact that phrases are used freely, while a traditional creed does, as so often, blind men to the real force of the expressions they employ—blind them in fact to everything outside the line of thought, which they are taught to believe constitutes the truth. Perhaps the best illustration that can be given of what I mean, will be gained by quoting from some collection of popular Hymns. I take then the well-known Hymns, *Ancient and Modern*, and quote a few passages as instances of my meaning. Hymn 45 has this verse :—

> "Thou, sorrowing at the helpless cry,
> "Of all creation doomed to die,
> "Did'st save our lost and guilty race."

But this is universal salvation : *the race of man saved*, if words have any meaning. And this

thought—the race saved—finds frequent expression elsewhere in these Hymns; nor let any man who regards honesty of speech, and common truthfulness, say that to offer salvation merely, is, or can be, the same thing as to save. See Hymns 56, v. 3, 4, 5, 6; 57, v. 3; 62, v. 2, 6; 200, v. 6, etc. Again, listen to these solemn words and tell me what they mean. Hymn 97, Part 2, v. 2 :—

> "Precious flood which all creation,
> "From the stain of sin hath freed."

And again v. 5 :—

> "That a shipwrecked race for ever
> "Might a port of refuge gain."

And Hymn 103, v. 5 :—

> "So a ransomed world shall ever
> "Praise THEE its redeeming LORD,"

Can it be right to talk of a ransomed world for ever praising its Redeemer, and yet to mean that all the time the world is not actually ransomed, and perhaps half, perhaps more, of its population are groaning in endless pain? Is this consistent with truth? Again, other hymns call on all creation to sing GOD's praise. Shall this praise then echo from Hell? See as a specimen, Hymns 144, v. 3 and 6, and 299, v. 4. etc., etc. I might well quote, in proof of this address to all creation to praise GOD, the familiar Doxology.

but I will only notice here a well known Hymn, No. 222 :—

"O day for which creation,
"And all its tribes were made;
"O joy for all its former woes,
"A thousand times repaid."

Now I will simply ask what these words mean: all creation is to have all its woes a thousand times repaid: if this is not universalism, what is universalism? Again, over and over, CHRIST is said to have vanquished sin, death, and SATAN:—Hymns, 147, v. 2; 148, v. 2; 196, v. 3, etc. But how can this be true on the popular creed? To say, that sin is vanquished, and death and SATAN, while Hell receives its myriads of the lost, is worse than absurd; *e.g.*, take this line from Hymn, No. 196 :—

"Death of death, and Hell's destruction,"

and say if the universalist's creed could be more distinctly stated: his utmost hopes have never gone beyond a vision of death abolished, and Hell destroyed? To pursue this further is needless, though it would be easy, and indeed full of interest: but I may point out how significant it is, to find the very opponents of the larger hope *forced*, unconsciously, to employ language directly teaching universal salvation. The explanation is simply, that they have been using the words and ideas of Scripture, while the fair, honest, meaning of their own words is obscured for them, by the spell of a narrow traditional creed.

Before passing on let me remark once more on the injurious moral tendency of the popular creed. Not merely has it fostered in man a spirit of cruelty (p. 39)—not alone does it promise a heaven which is one of utter selfishness (p. 42)—not merely does it point to evil as finally triumphant (p. 31—2), but it scatters broadcast, lessons of equivocation and untruth. For if to say one thing, while meaning something totally different, be falsehood, then with falsehood is the popular religious literature honeycombed from end to end! Everywhere it repeats that the race of man is saved, that CHRIST is the Saviour of mankind, while it really means that half mankind is damned. It tells us, I quote the *Record*, (Easter, 1885)—how "Satan is utterly "subdued," "his empire completely demolished," "his power for ever fallen." This teaching it repeats in a thousand forms, in countless hymns, in sermons, tracts, books; but it really means that Satan is triumphant, and his empire as enduring as GOD himself. Well may the sceptic exult, and the thoughtful Christian mourn at this duplicity, which stains our religious literature, this terrible perversion, in the holiest matters, of those words by which we shall be judged.

Again, there are, apart from all these passages, certain tendencies in the Gospel, whose drift and character are impossible to mistake.

That these tendencies exist I am far more certain than I can be of the meaning of any number of highly figurative texts. Now these tendencies are too clear, too broad, too distinct, to be considered accidental. So far from being a product of the age in which the New Testament was written, they are in conflict with the spirit of that age, and in advance of it. They must therefore represent something inherent in the Author of Christianity, and something essential to His design. I put the case very moderately in saying, how extremely difficult it is to reconcile the popular creed, with these undoubted tendencies of the New Testament. Can I reasonably believe that a system which, beyond all other creeds, has been distinguished by promoting mercy, goodness, love, tenderness for body and soul; a system, of which these qualities are the very essence, does indeed teach a doctrine of punishment so shocking, so horrible, that if really believed, it would turn this earth into a charnel-house, and spread over all nature lamentation, mourning, and woe?

Let me next shew that certain great principles of Revelation conflict with the popular creed. "I am sure," says a thoughtful writer, "these "are the two fundamental features of the "Christian Revelation, of which all its utterances "are the manifold expression, viz.:—1.—The "parental love of the Father. 2.—The "solidarity of mankind to be conformed to the

"image of His Son."—*Letters from a Mystic.* 1.—No one can deny that the New Testament contains a special revelation of the parental tie uniting us to God. When we pray and say, "our "Father" these two words convey the spirit of the whole Gospel. Now it is not too much to assert that the view generally held is an absolute negation of all that the parental tie implies. It robs the relation of all meaning. It reduces to a simple mockery the divine fatherhood, though that is of the very essence of Christianity.

I repeat, the essence of Christianity perishes in the virtual denial of any true fatherhood of our race on God's part. Follow out this thought, for it is of primary importance. We lose sight of the value of the individual soul, when dealing with the countless millions, who have peopled this earth, and passed away. What is one among so many? we are tempted to say, forgetting that the value of each human being is not in the least thereby altered: each soul is of infinite value, as if it stood alone, in the eyes of God its Father. And more than this, are we not altogether apt to forget another vital point, to forget whose the loss is, if any one soul perishes? it is the man's own loss, says our popular creed. But is this all? No, a thousand times no! It is God's loss: it is the Father who loses His child. The straying sheep of the parable is the Great Shepherd's loss: the missing

coin is the owner's loss. In this very fact lies the pledge that HE will seek on and on till HE find it. For only think of the value HE sets on each soul. He has stamped each with HIS own image: has conferred on each a share of HIS own immortality—of Himself: do but realize these things; put them into plain words, till you come thoroughly to believe them; and you must see how impossible it becomes to credit that unworthy theology, which tells you that such a Father can ever let perish the work of His own fingers, HIS own offspring. One step further to make this clearer: how has HE shown HIS sense of the value of the human spirit? The Incarnation must say. It is human life taken into closest alliance with the divine, man and GOD meeting in the GOD-MAN. And then follows the Atonement, proof on proof of the same truth, when He tasted death for every man, He in whose death all died. Such is the chain, whose golden links I have been endeavouring to follow and trace, whose links bind to the Father above every human soul; *every human* soul, be it distinctly affirmed. Or stay, is there not yet wanting the final link to complete this chain? It is to be found in the great truth, which completes what I have been saying; the truth of the Oneness of the human race, its organic unity. Let us consider this.

2. The principle of the organic unity of our

race is very legible in the divinely-given symbolism of the old law, and is reflected in the gospel with perfect clearness. What but this is the teaching of the "first fruits," and the "first "born" in Scripture? These imply and include, the one, the *whole* harvest; the other, the *whole* family, and not less. Now CHRIST is the "first fruits."—1 *Cor.* xv., 23, and CHRIST is the "first-born."—*Col.* i., 18. And what follows let St. PAUL say, "If the first "fruit be holy the "lump is also holy," the whole race. Thus this principle is affirmed in the great central doctrine of the Incarnation. For in CHRIST the first-fruits, mankind, *i.e.*, the aggregate of humanity, is taken into GOD. And so in his death all died, as the New Testament assures us, and in HIS resurrection all rise, nay, are risen. In other words, CHRIST'S relation, as the second ADAM, is not to individuals, but to the race; further it is an actual, not a possible or a potential relation, an *actual* relation giving salvation to all. "Once "introduce the belief in CHRIST'S divine nature, "and HIS death and resurrection are no longer "of the individual, but of the race. It was on "this belief the Church was founded, and built "up. The belief was not indeed drawn out with "exact precision, yet it was always implied in "the relation, which the believer was supposed "to hold toward GOD. The formula of Baptism "which has never changed, is unintelligible with-"out it. The Eucharist is emptied of the

"blessing which every age has sought in that "Holy Sacrament, if it be taken away. If CHRIST "took our nature upon HIM, as we believe, by "an act of love, it was not that of one, but of all. "HE was not one man only among men, but in "HIM *all humanity are gathered up*: and thus "now as at all time, *mankind* are, so to speak, "*organically united with him.*"—WESCOTT, *Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 176. And this union of the race of man with HIMSELF, it is that JESUS CHRIST would teach in one of HIS many pregnant hints, by always speaking of HIMSELF in HIS redeeming work, as the SON, not of the Jew, not of the Gentile, not of Mary, not of the carpenter, but the Son of Man.

Yes, the organic unity of mankind is a principle that from the fall to the story of the Incarnation, runs through the texture of Holy Scripture. Have you ever quietly thought over the very strange fact of what is called original sin? Have you asked yourself what it means, that you are suffering for something done thousands of years before your birth? The questions raised by this enquiry we need not try to settle, but we may say that it means at least this, that in the divine plan the *race* falls and rises together; that mankind is not a collection of separate units, but an organised whole. Each individual is not, so to speak, complete in himself, but is a living stone in the great building, is a

member of one great body, a member that if withdrawn, there would ensue a distinct loss to the whole, a mutilation in fact of the body. And so ADAM'S sin sent a shock through the whole body, exactly as when a hurt to any part sends a shock through our present body. This is the painful side, but it is only one side ; and unfortunately the popular creed, as so often, persists in looking at one side only, and that the dark side, and in looking away from the bright side, or at least in so looking at it, as to miss its real aspect. But here the New Testament comes to our rescue and assures us that "if in ADAM all die, so in the "second ADAM all shall be made alive." The race is fallen ; true, but the race is risen ; quite as true. Both facts strictly correspond ;

> "Of two such lessons why forget
> "The nobler and the Christlier one ?"

A partial salvation is thus in absolute conflict with this fundamental principle which the fall affirms, and to which the Incarnation testifies ; the unity of mankind, its Oneness. A partial salvation is thus in direct opposition to the great truth put by St. PAUL so clearly. "If through the "offence of one (the) many be dead, much more "the grace of GOD, and the gift of grace, which "is by one man, JESUS CHRIST, hath abounded "unto (the) many * * as by the offence of one, "judgement came upon all men to condemnation, "even so by the righteousness of one, the free "gift came upon unto all men unto justification of

"life." Observe, the offence is a thing actually imparted to, actually staining, ruining all men. And JESUS CHRIST came to bring to every man, to humanity, a salvation which shall be to mankind *much more* than the fall. But the popular view reads *much less*; and in millions of cases, as much less as Hell is less than Heaven.

But again, the view generally held conflicts with another great principle, viz.:—the unchangeableness of GOD. "If GOD be unchangeable, then "what we see of HIM at any moment, must be "true of HIM at every moment of time, true of "HIM also both before and after all the moments "of time; always and for ever true of HIM. If "HIS purpose be to save mankind, that purpose "stands firm for ever, unaffected by man's sin, "unshaken by the fact of death, unaltered and "unalterable by men, by angels, by aught con-"ceivable.—*Salvator Mundi*, p. 158. Redemption is no after-thought, it was planned in the full knowledge of all the extent of man's sin: knowing all, GOD declared his purpose to be to save the race. Redemption then is something indefeasible, except indeed GOD can change, or man be stronger than GOD, or the will of the created stronger than the will of the Creator. "The "gifts and calling of GOD are without repen-"tance."—*Rom.* xi., 29. That is, what GOD gives cannot be refused, whom GOD calls, they must be saved. And this unchangeable purpose of

GOD is stated afresh in the words that describe JESUS CHRIST as "*the same* yesterday, to-day, "and for ever" (for the ages)—words deeply significant, and yet, whose true teaching so very often escapes attention.

And here let me close this part of my argument by introducing a story, for whose truth I vouch, to show how practical these considerations really are. In a certain quarter of London, one of the many evangelists, employed for that purpose, had gone forth to preach to the people. When he had concluded an eloquent address, he was thus accosted by one of his hearers :—"Sir," said the man, "may I ask "you one or two questions?" "Surely," said the Preacher. "You have told us, that GOD's "love for us, is very great and very strong." "Yes." "That HE sent HIS SON on purpose "to save us, and that I may be saved this "moment, if I will." "Yes." "But, that if I go "away without an immediate acceptance of this "offer, and if a few minutes after I were to "be by any accident, killed on my way home, "I should find myself in Hell for ever and ever." "Yes." "Then," said the man, "if so, I don't "want to have anything to do with a Being "*whose love for me can change so completely in five* "*minutes.*"

"GOD so loved the world"—Has HE ceased to love it? *If so, when?* "love is not love that

alters, where it alteration finds," even human love, if true, never changes. Yet this love is but a faint, far off, reflection of our Father's love. GOD is not love and justice, or love and anger. HE is love, *i.e.*, love essential. Therefore HIS wrath is but a mode of HIS love. HIS vengeance is but love in action. To say that GOD cannot change, is to say that HIS love cannot change. Hence HIS love being changeless, pursues the sinner to the outer darkness, and draws him thence. An earthly parent, who, being able to help, should sit unmoved, month after month, year after year, watching, but never helping, the agonies of his own offspring, is a picture more hideous than any the records of crime can furnish. What shall we say to those who heighten enormously, infinitely, all that is shocking in such a picture, until its blackest details become light itself; and then tell us that the parent in this ghastly scene is one who is love, love infinite, almighty, and our Father?

Finally, what graver fact can be stated than this, that a partial salvation aims a blow at both the Incarnation, and the Atonement? Of the Incarnation I have briefly spoken, and have shewn that its central idea is the taking of the race of man, *as an indivisible* whole, into GOD through JESUS CHRIST, the second ADAM. But with this fundamental idea, a partial salvation is in hopeless contradiction. Not less vital is the

blow aimed by the popular creed at the Atonement, for that creed virtually teaches (p. 32) that the Cross is a stupendous failure. This is easily shown. For plainly that which misses its end is a failure. And if the end aimed at be noble, then in proportion is the failure greater and vital. But the Scriptural evidence is overwhelming, that the object of CHRIST'S death was to save the *world*. "The Father sent the Son to be the "Saviour of the world." HE came "that the "world through HIM might be saved." If then this end be not gained, if the world be not in fact saved, the *Atonement* is a failure. Disguise the fact as men may, the dilemma is inevitable. Answer or evasion, there is none. I press this point (which may fitly close these chapters), that to teach in any form, under any modification, a partial salvation, is to aim a blow at the Cross and Passion of our LORD: it is to strike at the Incarnation, and Atonement, and through them, at the whole scheme of salvation.

CHAPTER IV.

"*WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES.*"

Quanto qnis altius in antiquitate christiana eminuit, tanto magis spem finiendorum olim cruciatuum aluit atque defendit.—*Dœder. Inst. Theol.* ii, 199.

In this chapter I propose to shew: 1. That universalism prevailed very widely in the primitive church, especially in the earliest centuries. 2. That those who believed and taught it, more or less openly, or held kindred views, were among the most eminent, and the most holy of the Christian Fathers. 3. That the larger hope, not alone has never been condemned by the Church, but is, far more than any other, in harmony with the ancient Catholic Creeds. 4. That in our Prayer Book are not a few passages, which shew a distinct leaning towards universalism. Strong and clear as is the evidence which I hope to adduce, doubtless it would have been stronger still, had not the dangerous doctrine of Reserve been held by so many Fathers—a doctrine which justified the suppression of a truth which it was judged

inexpedient to divulge—and which was *specially* brought to bear on this particular question* of universalism. I may mention as avowed universalists among the Fathers, or holding kindred views: S. CLEMENT of Alexandria; ORIGEN; S. GREGORY (Thaumaturgus); HILARY the Deacon; TITUS of Bostra; S. GREGORY of Nazianzus; S. GREGORY of Nyssa; S. JEROME; THEODORET; DIODORUS of Tarsus; DIDYMUS; etc., etc.

The earliest of all Christian writers, CLEMENT ROMANUS, may claim a brief notice before we pass on. It is noteworthy that in his epistle, which is of considerable length, there is *not a word* tending to shew that he believed in endless punishment; while there are two or three passages that seem to suggest at least hope for all. Thus he says "GOD is free from wrath "toward *all* HIS creatures." "GOD does good "to *all*, most abundantly to us Christians." "We "are justified * * by that faith, through "which GOD has justified *all* men."

As a proof of the early appearance of universalist views in the Church, the following is of interest: "Within a hundred years" says Dr. COX, "of "the death of St. JOHN, there appeared a work

* So true is this that there is reason to suppose that the larger hope was secretly held by some who, in their public teaching maintained explicitly the ordinary creed.

"of fiction, called the Gospel of Nicodemus, "which proposed to set forth all the details of "CHRIST's descent into Hades; of course, to us, "this fiction speaks with an authority no greater "than that of the Pilgrim's Progress; although, "when it appeared, it was very widely received "as an authoritative description of our LORD's "ministry in Hades. But just as from BUNYAN's "great allegory, we might very safely infer what "the Puritan conception of the Christian life was "in the seventeenth century; so from this Gospel "of Nicodemus, we may very safely infer, what "conception the Christians of the second century "formed of CHRIST's descent into Hades; "and in this Gospel it is expressly affirmed that "when HE arrived, the gates of the Hadean "prison burst open before HIM, and the KING OF "GLORY, taking our forefather, ADAM, by the "hand, and turning to the vast multitude of "imprisoned spirits, said, 'come all with me, as "many as have died through the tree which he, "(ADAM) touched, for behold I raise you *all* up "through the tree of the Cross.'" It is impossible to resist the conclusion that so to teach involves universalism. All, without exception, who had died in ADAM, are to be raised up to new life through the Cross.

"It argues," says S. GREGORY the Great, "absolute *fatuity*, to suppose that those who lived

"after the Incarnation can be worse off than if "they had lived before it."—*Lib.* vii. *ep.* xv. Here, then, is a most significant fact, pointing to the wide currency of universalist views in the early church; for it is clear that many of the Fathers taught that CHRIST freed every soul, without exception, from the prison of Hades.

As the point is interesting, I add here some further quotations. I shall begin with another brief extract from the antient Gospel of NICODEMUS. Hades, personified, speaks of the result of CHRIST'S preaching in these words: "Not "one of the dead has been left in me." A statement, perhaps even earlier, of the same fact is given by EUSEBIUS, as found by him at Edessa, in the archives, to the effect that CHRIST had descended into Hades * * and brought up the dead with HIM. To the same effect, apparently of *all* the dead; he, himself, writes "that CHRIST opened a way "of return to life for the dead bound in chains of death."—*Dem. evan.* iv. 12. IRENÆUS seems to teach the same: "The Word made spoil of Satan's goods, namely, those men "whom he held in bondage."—*Cont. Hær.*, v. 21. So S. CYPRIAN: "CHRIST descending into Hades, brought back "that which had been of old made captive."—*De unct. Chris.* Again ATHANASIUS (?) 373 A.D., writes: "The Devil "sitting by the gates sees *all* the fettered beings led forth "by the courage of the SAVIOUR."—*In. Pass. Dom.* So, too, S. GREGORY of Nazianzus, says: "CHRIST loosed, by "HIS blood, *all* who groan under Tartarean chains;" and elsewhere speaks of the object of the descent as being that "CHRIST might deliver *all*, being free HIMSELF."—*In Chris. pat.* To the same effect writes S. AMBROSE (?) 357 A.D., CHRIST in HIS "descent gave to *all* pardon, bearing them "aloft into Heaven."—*Ad. Rom.* And again "CHRIST "having destroyed the empire of death, recalled to life, out "of the jaws of Satan, souls bound in sin."—*De myst Paschæ.* c. iv. S. CHRYSOSTOM has many passages to the

same effect: "By CHRIST'S dying Tartarus lost those whom "it contained."—*Serm.* v. Again, he represents CHRIST as saying: "Lo, I exterminate the abodes of Tartarus, and "darkness profound."—*Serm.* iii. Elsewhere the same Father says: "CHRIST bound the devil and brought his prey, "*the human race*, into the treasury of the Eternal King."—*In Ps.* 46. A similar passage is found in a homily of this Father's on *Ps.* 145. S. AMBROSE writes: CHRIST "descending "into Hades set free *the human race*."—*In. ep. ad Gal.* ch. iii. So S. JEROME: "The LORD set *all* free, when HIS "Spirit went down into Hades."—*In Ose.* ch. xiii. And so in another passage: "The region of the dead, "which is torn asunder and *emptied*, when by the death of "CHRIST the souls bound in Hell are set free."—*In Job*, ch. 36. So S. CYRIL of Alexandria, 444 A.D., writes of CHRIST as "having spoiled Hades, and left the Devil there *solitary* and "*deserted*" (significant words).—*Hom.* vii. And again, "CHRIST wandering down even to Hades has *emptied* the "dark, hidden, unseen treasuries."—*Glaphy.* ii. And in another place he says that "Hades was stript of its spirits." *Hom.* vi., so, too, *Hom.* xi. DOROTHEUS has the following, "By ADAM'S transgression the enemy made us all captives, "* * CHRIST then took us again out of the enemy's "hand."—*De sanct. Pasch.* I shall close this list with a quotation from LEO (Imperator). "CHRIST is risen, bringing "Hades with HIM." He adds, that thus "Hades, death, "and the hateful Devil are utterly overthrown."—*Hom.* ii. These passages indicate a very wide-spread belief in the deliverance, by CHRIST, of the whole human race from Hades.

But there is another way in which we may find the larger hope virtually, though indirectly, taught by some of the Fathers.

I may state the case thus: There is reason to think that several Fathers, *e.g.*, LACTANTIUS, HILARY, BASIL, and AMBROSE, believed at least in the *final* salvation of *all* the

baptised, no matter what their life had been. But this teaching involves universalism, because our LORD plainly implies that those who disobey wilfully, as do unfaithful Christians, will have a worse future doom than the Heathen, who have never heard of HIM. Nor is this all. The language of several of the Fathers in the Manichæan controversy certainly involves universalism. I refer to the arguments used in controverting the views of those, who taught the eternity of two opposing principles of good and evil. The Catholic teachers "prove their point, either by "asserting, that *all evil shall one day cease*, or else that evil "is nothing. Thus in the dabate between MANES and "ARCHELAUS, A.D. 227, the truth is sustained against the "Manichæan view, by the declaration that all evil may and "will cease," a point surely most significant; for what is the larger hope but this—the cessation of all evil? Again, many of the Fathers, *e.g.*, S. ATHANASIUS, BASIL, GREGORY of Nyssa, and others, often use language implying, that evil has no real being, or is, in fact, a tendency to non-existence. The latter view is distinctly taught by S. AUGUSTINE.—*De. mor. Man.* ii. 2, 3. "But if this be so, "asks Mr. JUKES, what becomes of the doctrine of never "ending punishment, which is surely never ending existence "in evil? The popular creed is thus shown to be practically undistinguishable from the Manichæan heresy, in so far as both agree in the *essential fact of teaching the eternal duration of evil.*

I will now take the more direct testimony in favour of universalism, which abounds in the writings of the Fathers. The first witness I propose to call is the famous S. CLEMENT of Alexandria, 190 A.D., head of the catechetical school there.

His language is quite clear. "So CHRIST saves *all* men. "Some HE converts by penalties, others who follow HIM of

"their own will, and in pursuance of the worthiness of HIS "honour; that *every knee* may be bent to HIM, of those in "Heaven, on earth, and under the earth, *i.e.*, angels, men, "and souls, who, before HIS coming, passed away from this "mortal life."—*In 1 ep. S. Joann.* And again, all "things "have been appointed by the LORD for the salvation of *all*, "both in general and in particular. * * Necessary dis- "cipline by the goodness of the great overseeing Judge, "through the proximate angels, through the final judgement, "compels even those who have entirely despaired to repent" *Strom.* vii. 7. Comment on these words is needless. S. CLEMENT here asserts with perfect distinctness, that willingly, or taught by penalty, *all* souls shall repent and be saved. So, again, he asks, "How is HE a SAVIOUR *except* "*He is Lord and Saviour of all?* HE is certainly the "SAVIOUR of those who have believed, and of those who "have believed not HE is LORD, until by being brought to "confess HIM, they shall receive the blessings, suited and "adapted to them. HE is SAVIOUR, not of some and of "others not. HIS will must take effect. Nor can HE who "is LORD of all, ever be hindered by another. HE will "never neglect HIS own work Being then the Father's "power, HE easily prevails in what HE wishes; so that HIS "design to save cannot fail. HE * * by the "will of the Father directs the salvation of *all.* "GOD is the One Almighty Good GOD, from eternity to "eternity *(a seculo in seculum)*, saving by HIS SON. All "things are arranged with a view to the *salvation of the* "*universe* by the Lord of the universe."—*Strom. Lib.* vii. Again the same Father says of CHRIST, "That HE "pervades equally *all humanity* * * having bestowed "on man the *inalienable* inheritance of the Father * * "inscribing on our minds the law * * that *all* shall "know GOD, from small to great."—*Cohort. ad. gent.* cxi. In the same spirit he comments on the words: "If to- "day we hear HIS voice" by saying that with "GOD it is "always to-day; to-day is eternity, extends over eternity," implying that those unsaved in time will then be saved "for

"this," CLEMENT adds in the same chapter, "and nothing "but this is CHRIST'S *only* work, the salvation of man."—*Ib.* ix. Lastly, in an interesting passage, S. CLEMENT speaks of CHRIST as having "yoked *the team of humanity* to GOD," and as thus "driving into Heaven * * crowned with "victory." Of S. CLEMENT, I would say, that like GREGORY of Nyssa, universalism is not incidentally taught by him, but lies at the very centre of his teaching. GOD, in his view, is ruling the universe with a fixed resolve to save all. If men are disobedient to the message of salvation, then by discipline and by punishments, HE sooner or later brings all to repentance.

Before passing on, I may point out that S. CLEMENT, like many of the Fathers, regarded death as a provision designed in mercy for the healing of the lapsed race of man—see on death, ch. ix. To this effect writes an early Father, in the second century, in words clear and significant:—

"And GOD shewed great kindness to man, in this, that "HE did not suffer him to continue being in sin for ever; "but as it were by a kind of banishment, cast him out of "paradise, in order that, having by punishment expiated "within an appointed time the sin, and having been disci- "plined, he *should be afterwards recalled.* * * Further, "just as a vessel, when on being fashioned, it has some flaw, "is being re-moulded, or re-made, that it may *become new* "*and entire; so also it happens to man by death.* For he is "broken up by force, that in the resurrection he may be "*whole*, I mean righteous, spotless and immortal."—THEOPHILUS of Antioch, *ad Autolycum*, ii. 26. Here death is viewed as provided in mercy for a fallen creature, and as a means for the restoration of the human race to paradise: a view most suggestive to the thoughtful. It is interesting to note the very same illustration in S. GREGORY of Nyssa.

He supposes a vessel of clay, which by craft, has been filled with molten lead; the vessel representing man, the lead our sins, and GOD the potter. He describes the potter as breaking up the vessel to re-mould it, and banish the intruding matter: "So HE, who is our Potter, dissolving away (by "death) the tainted part, will bring back the vessel, re-"moulded through the resurrection, into its former beauty." —*Cat. orat.* viii.—See note on S. AMBROSE, in this chapter. In the same general tone is the treatise of ATHENAGORAS, A.D. 177, on the Resurrection. I give a few sentences. "And as this follows, of necessity there must be a resurrec-"tion of the bodies which are dead or even wholly dissolved, "and the same men must be formed anew * * for if "this takes place, there follows too, the end which befits "the nature of man. But the end of an intelligent life, and "a reasonable judgement, one cannot go wrong in saying, is "* * to rejoice unceasingly in the vision of HIM who is, "and of HIS decrees."—*De. resurr.* c. XXV, As illustrating further this idea, let me again quote S. CLEMENT. In his view the penalty of the law is beautiful and good, its object is healing even in inflicting death. "If a man goes on in "wickedness, it condemns such an one to death, as the "course most conducive to health. So that when any one "falls into incurable evil * * it will be for his good if he "is put to death." So, "the terror which the law begets "is in order to salvation."—*Strom.* i. xxvii. Even of Sodom CLEMENT writes: "The just punishment of the Sodomites "became to men an image of the *salvation* which is well "calculated for men."—*Pæd.* iii. 8. And, writing on *Jude* vii, of the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah, he says: "By "which the LORD signifies that pardon had been granted, "and that on being disciplined they had repented," and on verse v., says of the Jews, "they perished until they "turned to the LORD." ..*Frag.* ii. (*in An Nic. Lib.*), *i.e.* by dying they lived. These extracts shew that in his view all penalty, death included, is a mode of healing and cure.

Further proof of the prevalence of universalist

views at a very early date in the Church, may be drawn from the so-called Sibylline books, which were composed (except a certain portion, which is pre-christian), at various dates in the second and third centuries. These books furnish us with most valuable evidence as to the beliefs current in the Church, in these early days.

They teach distinctly the future torments of the lost, but add that finally, at the request of the blessed, they shall be admitted to a share of the joys of Heaven. "To them GOD "shall grant to save mankind, for gathering each from "unwearied flame, removing them elsewhere, HE shall send "them to a life different and *eternal for immortals*."—*Orac.* ii. 331. The true force of this is only seen when we remember that the object of the authors of these books was to draw, by any means, the heathen over to Christianity. Now it would have helped this end if they could have depicted a future of hopeless torment as awaiting unbelievers. This doctrine then it was their direct interest to teach. But instead of doing this they taught the final restoration of all; giving this proof, practically irresistible, that the larger hope was, to them, so essential a part of Christianity that they dared not teach otherwise.

I give next a few quotations from the famous ORIGEN, born at Alexandria A.D. 186, and when only 18 called to preside over its school of theology.

Writing on 1 *Cor.* xv. 28, he says, "When the Son is said "to be subject to the Father, the perfect restoration of the "*whole creation* is signified."—*De prin.* iii. 5. And again, speaking of the end, "God will be all * * "seeing evil "nowhere exists, for GOD is all things." "When death "shall no longer exist, or the sting of death, nor any evil at "all, then, verily GOD will be *all in all*."—*Ib.* iii. vi.

Elsewhere this Father states the same doctrine. "But "those who have been removed from their primal state of "blessedness have not been removed irrecoverably * * "and being remoulded by salutary discipline and principles, "they may recover themselves, and be restored to their "condition of happiness."—*De prin.* i. vi.—Of ORIGEN'S system of doctrine, I shall speak in another part of this chapter. Here it is enough to say, first, that universalism was taught before him by S. CLEMENT; secondly, that it was *wholly independant* of his system; and thirdly, it was held by some of those who *opposed his views* quite as firmly as by himself.

Another antient universalist is the well-known S. GREGORY (Thaumaturgus). Born of heathen parents, he was converted, A.D. 234, by ORIGEN, whose friend and pupil he became.

As Bishop of Neo Cæsareia, he was distinguished for orthodoxy and numerous miracles. He there converted nearly the whole population to Christianity. Bound as he was to ORIGEN by the closest possible ties, he would naturally, in turn, teach the larger hope; and thus, from so important a centre as Cæsareia, a vast district, would in turn, be leavened. That S. GREGORY did, in fact, so teach is no mere conjecture, as we know from RUFINUS, *Invec. in Hier. Lib.* i. *prope fin.*, who speaks of his opinions as *notorious.*

Our next witness shall be FABIUS MARIUS VICTORINUS, 360 A.D., a very distinguished rhetorician at Rome (where he was converted to Christianity), who uses language which implies the ultimate purification and salvation of all.

Christ will, he says, "regenerate all things, as he created "all things. By the life that is in Him, *all things* will be

"purged and return into eternal life. Christ is to subject "all things to HIMSELF * * when this shall have been "accomplished, GOD will be all things, because all things "will be full of GOD."—*Adv. Arium lib.* i., *et* iii. At about the same date there flourished a famous catholic champion against Arianism, MARCELLUS, Bishop of Ancyra, 330 A.D. In his *History of Ant. Universalism* (a book to which I desire to express myself deeply indebted), BALLOU states that MARCELLUS was a universalist, giving as authority a quotation from *Euseb. Cont. Marc.* i, in NEANDER'S *Ch. his.* ii. 609 which I have not been able to verify.

About this same period there flourished a writer (supposed to be HILARY, a deacon of the Roman Church), whose works are extant under the name of AMBROSIASTER.

They supply fresh proof how outspoken was the universalism of the early church. "This seemed good to "GOD to manifest in CHRIST the mystery of HIS will * * "namely, that HE should be merciful to all who had "strayed, whether in Heaven or in earth (*i.e.*, fallen angels "or men) * * *Every *being then * * is being restored to "the place in which it was created, by learning the knowledge "of Christ."—In Eph.* iii. 9-10. These striking words show how freely, in primitive days, not merely the final salvation of all men, but of all evil spirits was taught.

The next witness I shall call is a famous Catholic Father, TITUS, Bishop of Bostra, 364 A.D., who taught explicitly an extreme form of universalism. He is described in the preface to

* These words seem *decisive;* but BALLOU asserts (without, however, giving any proof) that AMBROSIASTER believed some obstinate cases to be past recovery.

his writings by CAILLOU, as "the most learned "among the learned bishops of his age."

Three books out of four which he wrote against the Manichæans are extant, I transcribe a striking passage, in which he is speaking of evil spirits. "The very pit itself "is a place of torments and of punishments, but is *not* "*eternal* * * It was made that it might be a *medicine* "*and yield help to those who sin.* Sacred are the stripes "*which are remedies* and *helps* to those who have strayed." He adds that the object of penalty is healing. "Therefore "let us not complain of the pits (of Hell)—abyssis—but "rather know that by torments and punishments *those are* "*healed* who have offended." He goes on to say "That the "evil spirits (dæmones) themselves *are not radically evil*, nor "have they *the root of sin and vice* (in themselves), "but have sinned of free will, seeing that they *were not* "*naturally evil.*"—*Lib.* i., ch. xxxii. Such words from a Bishop and Father, so eminent, of so early a date, and so orthodox, are very significant. TITUS teaches the salvation of all evil spirits, a form of universalism which goes to the very extremest point possible. Compare remarks on page 82, on the Manichæan controversy.

Another very great name there is, whose testimony must be given here, S. GREGORY, of Nazianzus, 373 A.D., president of the second great Ecumenical Council, "the most learned bishop "in one of the most learned ages of the church." His language certainly shows a distinct leaning to universalist views.

Let us take a few examples of the way in which he hints to say the least, his belief in the final salvation of all men. Speaking of the dead, he tells us that GOD brings them to life as partakers either of fire or of illuminating light. "But whether *even all* shall hereafter partake of GOD, let it be

"elsewhere discussed"—these words speak for themselves, In the same tone, cautious, and no doubt influenced by that doctrine of Reserve already mentioned, S. GREGORY says elsewhere—"I know also a fire not cleansing but penal * * "which, more to be dreaded than all, is conjoined with the "undying worm, which is not quenched * * unless anyone "pleases, even in this instance, to understand this more "humanely and worthily of HIM who punishes."—*Orat.* xi. "*It is manifest,*" says PETAVIUS, "that in this place, "GREGORY doubted about the pains of the damned, "whether they would be endless, or whether they are to be "estimated rather in accordance with the mercy of GOD, "so as at some time to be brought to an end." But there remains further evidence of S. GREGORY'S views. He teaches, with perfect distinctness, that when CHRIST descended into Hell, HE liberated not some, but *all* the souls there in prison (See pp. 79-81). This view, as already shewn, implies universalism.

Our next witness deserves special attention—the famous GREGORY, of NYSSA, 380 A.D., at once the very flower of orthodoxy, and the most unflinching advocate of extreme universalism.

I proceed to quote in proof of this. S. GREGORY, in a remarkable passage, speaks of CHRIST as "both *freeing* "*mankind* from their wickedness, and healing the *very in-*"*ventor of wickedness* (the Devil)."—*Cat. orat. ch.* 26. Again he tells us that "when, in the lengthened circuits "of time, the evil now blended with and implanted in them, "has been *taken away;* when the restoration to their "ancient state of those who now lie in wickedness shall "have taken place, there shall be with one voice thanks-"giving from *the whole creation.*"—*Ib.* In another treatise the same great Father writes, "for it is needful that at some "time, *evil shall be removed utterly and entirely* from the "realm of existence. For since by its very nature evil "cannot exist apart from free choice, when free choice

"becomes in the power of GOD, shall not evil advance "to *utter abolition, so that no receptacle for it shall* "*be left ?*"—*De an. et. ressurrect.* Here it is quite clear that the saint anticipates the utter extinction of evil at some future day. Again, writing on *Phil.* ii. 10, S. GREGORY says that "in this passage is signified, that "when *evil has been obliterated* in the long circuits of the "ages, nothing shall be left outside the limits of good; but "even from them shall be unanimously uttered the confes- "sion of the Lordship of CHRIST."—*Ib.* "The word seems "to lay down the doctrine of the *perfect obliteration of* "*wickedness*, for if GOD shall be in all things that are, "obviously wickedness shall not be in them."—*Ib.* Again, "he teaches "that a time shall come when *all* the corruptions "that sin has brought in shall be blotted from *the whole* "*creation.*"—*Ib.* In another treatise of the same Father, the *Orat. in* 1 *Cor.* xv. 28, there is the widest possible asser- tion of universalism, viz., "at some time the nature of evil "shall pass *to extinction, being fully and completely removed* "*from the realm of existence;* and divine unmixed goodness shall "embrace in itself *every rational nature*: nothing that has "been made by GOD falling away from the Kingdom of "GOD: when, all the evil that is blended with existence, "being melted away by the action of the cleansing fire, "everything that has had its being from GOD shall become "such as it was at first, when as yet untainted by evil." In this strain, S. GREGORY continues all through this treatise. Every form of evil is to be swept away; every rational creature shall bow the knee in love and peace to JESUS CHRIST. "For it is evident that GOD will, in truth, be 'in "all' then when there shall be *no evil seen* in anything." And again "when *every created being* is at harmony with "itself * * and every tongue shall confess that JESUS "CHRIST is LORD; when *every creature* shall have been "made one body, then shall the body of CHRIST be subject "to the Father." * * Now the body of CHRIST, "as I have often said, is *the whole of humanity.*" Again in the clearest manner, S. GREGORY maintains, that subjection

to GOD is reconciliation to GOD. "Where it is said "that GOD's enemies shall be subjected to GOD * * this is "meant that the power of evil shall be taken away, and "they who, on account of their disobedience, were called "GOD'S enemies, shall *by subjection*, be made *God's friends*. "* * When then *all* who once were GOD'S enemies, shall "have been made HIS footstool (because they *shall receive in "themselves the divine imprint*), when death shall have been "destroyed; in the subjection of all, which is not servile "humility, but immortality and blessedness, CHRIST is said, "by S. PAUL, to be made subject to GOD." The breadth of view in these extracts is almost startling, and if space permitted, they might very easily be increased. Universalism in its extremest form, not in isolated sentences, but as the centre of his teaching, characterizes this great Father. And this universalism is as fearless as it is clear; it is written in defence of the Catholic Faith. With the Dean of Wells, I say, "That S. GREGORY claims to be taking his stand on "the doctrines of the Church in this teaching, with as "much confidence as when he is expounding the mysteries "of the Divine nature, as set forth in the Creed of Nicæa." And later Councils, *e.g.*, Ephesus and Constantinople, appealed to this universalist Father as *a bulwark of the Church against heresy*.

Our next witness shall be the celebrated DIDYMUS, 380 A.D., a prodigy of learning, who, in spite of his blindness, rose to be head of the theological school of Alexandria.

There seems no doubt that he taught the larger hope in the extremest form. RUFINUS, who calls him his master, alludes to it as an undoubted fact.—*Invect in Hier. lib.* i. See also *Cyrill. Scyth. Vit. S. P. Sabæ.* In this view of DIDYMUS, both NEANDER and GIESELER agree. Not many of his writings survive. The following short extract is worth quoting, "*As mankind by being reclaimed from their "sins* are to be subjected to CHRIST in the dispensation

"appointed for the *salvation of all*, so the (fallen) angels will "be reduced to obedience by the correction of their vices." —*Comm. in* 1 *Peter* iii.

Let us in passing, not omit the testimony of S. AMBROSE, 390 A.D.

"Not only are there passages in his book.—*De bono mortis*" says Mr. JUKES, "which can never, as it appears "to me be reconciled with the doctrine of never-ending "punishment, but the whole drift of the book is in an "entirely opposite direction. Thus the whole fourth "chapter is to prove that death is altogether good, because "it is the end of sin, as also because it redeemed the world. "* * In a word, according to S. AMBROSE, sin is the great "evil, while, what we call death is GOD'S means to deliver "man from the evil. But all this is directly opposed to the "popular notion of future punishment, which regards the "second death as hopeless torment." I take the following from chapter iv. of this book: "In every way then death "is good * * because it does not change one's state for the "worse. We shall find death to be the end of sin. The "LORD suffered death that guilt might cease. What is "death but the burial of vices, the stirring up of virtues? "What more can be said of the good of death, than that "death redeemed the world? Why blame death, which "either pays the price of life or ends its pain and torment? "If life be a burden, death is a release; if life be a punish-"ment, death is a remedy." The following, too, is worth "quoting: "Christo dedit Pater omne judicium. Poterit "ergo te ille damnare pro quo se obtulit? * * Nonne dicet, "quæ utilitas in sanguine meo si damno quem ipse salvavi?" —*De Jacob. et vit beat.* It would be hard to state more concisely the larger hope. And so of Dives the same Father writes, "that he was tormented by retributive "suffering, in order that he might the sooner *escape*."—*In Ps.* cxviii. 1.

Nor should the great name of DIODORUS, of Tarsus, be absent from the roll of early universalists.

In his life time he was noted for zeal in defence of the Nicene Creed, and died in universal honour; having, says THEODORET, saved the bark of the Church from being submerged under the waves of unbelief. Of his numerous writings but little has survived. The following is from his book *De œcon.*: "For the wicked there are punish-"ments, not perpetual * * but they are to be tormented "for a certain brief period * * according to the amount of "malice in their works. They shall therefore suffer punish-"ment for a short space, but *immortal blessedness*, having no "end *awaits them.* * * The resurrection, therefore, is "regarded as a blessing not only to the good but also to the "evil."—(See p. 145).

A contemporary of DIODORUS was the eminent THEODORE* of Mopsuestia, and like him a universalist. THEODORE enjoyed during his life time an extraordinary renown as a teacher of the Catholic faith. "He was," says DORNER, "the "crown and climax of the school of Antioch, and "was called the Master of the East from his "theological eminence."

THEODRE teaches "that in the world to come, those who "have done evil all their life long, will be made worthy of

* THEODORE and DIODORUS, after they had rested for a century and a quarter in their honoured graves, were it is true, condemned as *Nestorians* in the Fifth Council, an assembly unrecognised by the English Church. *No question of universalism was thereby raised*, for the very promoters of this council *were Origenists* and intrigued against THEODORE on the *very ground of his hostility to Origen.* "Every accession to our knowledge of THEODORE adds strength to "the conviction, that he was entirely unconscious of deviating from "the Catholic Church"—*Swete, Comm.*

"the sweetness of the Divine bounty. For never would "CHRIST have said, 'Until thou hast paid the uttermost "farthing,' unless it were possible for us to be cleansed "when we have paid the debt." Again, S. PAUL, he argues, speaks of the Resurrection as a boon. "But how can it be "a blessing if a penalty, without any design of amendment, "be allotted to them that rise? Who *is so great a fool* as to "think that so great a blessing can be to those that arise "the occasion of endless torment?"—*Frag.* iv. *(Migne. S. Jer.)*. "Death and corruption shall come to an end, all "things being brought back to one harmony, as S. PAUL "wrote to the *Rom.* viii. 18-23."—*Swete.* i. 268.

I take next THEODORET, the Blessed. This great Father was, I cannot doubt, a universalist. Born at Antioch, 393, he became Bishop of Cyrus, in Syria, in 427, A.D.

Writing on 1 *Cor.* xv. 25, he says, "That in the future life "when corruption is at an end, and immortality granted, "there is no place for suffering, but it (suffering) being *totally* "*removed, no form of sin remains at work.* So shall GOD "be all in all, *all things* being out of danger of falling, and "*converted to Him.*" In THEODORET'S view the resurrection was not merely a bodily but a spiritual force (essentially) bringing to man's whole nature immortality and immunity from sufferings (a view held substantially by S. GREGORY of Nyssa (p. 145), see his comments on *Rom* v. 15-8 and viii. 20-3. In this spirit THEODORET writes in the tenth oration on Providence "CHRIST is to free from death the "entire nature *of the human race,*" on the words, "I, if I "be lifted up will draw all men unto ME." "CHRIST," he says, "will not suffer merely for the sake of the body, but "will fully accomplish the resurrection to *all men,*" *i.e.*, the spiritual blessings it conveys.

This view of the Resurrection, as in itself a blessing *to all*, as implying restoration spiritually

deserves to be noted. S. GREGORY, of Nyssa, teaches it very distinctly, as do other Fathers.

In this view *the* Resurrection meant *to all* a higher life—a restoration—an undoing of all the work of the Fall. It meant immortality and incorruption—things, says S. GREGORY, peculiar to the Divine nature, and in themselves a blessing. There is a long and striking passage to this effect in the *De an. et resur.* "The apostle's words seem to "me to imply * what our definition contains, *i.e.*, that the "Resurrection *is nothing else than the restoration of our nature* "*to its ancient* state of blessedness. This corruptible must put "on incorruption. *Evidently*, incorruption and honour and "glory are peculiar to the Divine nature * * *Every* "human being singly, divested of mortality and blended "with the earth, is to be born again in the Resurrection "into HIS pristine beauty. * * Doubtless, the evil "are to look for great severity from the Judge; but after "due curative treatment, and when the fire shall have "destroyed all foreign matter, then the nature, even of "these, shall improve by the copious nurture they receive, "and at length they, too, shall regain the Divine impress." I might very easily quote more, but the sentences cited are enough for the thoughtful. They are, indeed, only what S. PAUL teaches, 1 *Cor.* xv., and explain his tone of triumph in view of the Resurrection, and his *hope* that there would be a resurrection of the unjust as well as of the just.—*See on Acts* xxiv. 15, *p.* 145. Lastly, let me point out what fresh hope and light thus fall on the familiar words, so aptly conjoined, "I believe in *the Resurrection of the Body*, and the "*Life everlasting*."

Next we shall consider the testimony of S. JEROME, the most learned of all the Latin Fathers.

Born near Aquileia, 346 A.D., he became a student in Rome, passing his latest years in monastic seclusion and

literary labour at Bethlehem. It will surprise some readers to learn how strongly S. JEROME wrote in his commentaries in favour of universalism in its extremest form. I will take some specimens. "CHRIST will, in the ages to "come, show, not to one, but to the *whole number of rational* "*creatures*, HIS glory, and the riches of HIS grace, by "means of us (Christians)." * * "The saints are to reign "over the *fallen angels, and the prince of this world, Lucifer,* * *even to them bringing blessing* * *—*In Eph.* ii. 7. Most explicit and outspoken is the following:—"In the "end of all things the whole body which has been dissipated "and torn into divers parts shall be restored." * * "Let us understand the *whole number of rational creatures* "under the figure of a single body" * * let us imagine "this body to be torn * in pieces, and then suppose some "wonderful physician to come and restore to its place every "part * * So in the restitution of all things, when "the true physician, JESUS CHRIST, shall have come to "heal the body of the Church, *every one* * shall "receive his proper place * * What I mean is, "the *fallen angel will begin to be that which he was* "*created*, and *man*, who has been expelled from Paradise, "*will be once more restored to the tilling of Paradise*. These "things then will take place *universally*."—*In Eph.* iv. 16. Again, S. JEROME says expressly, "With GOD *no rational* "*creature perishes eternally*."—*In Gal.* v. 20. "For GOD "pities his creature, and will not suffer those whom HE "himself *has formed to perish eternally*. * * Seeing "then that the spirit comes from GOD * * *it is not just* "*that they should perish eternally*, who are sustained by "HIS breath and spirit."—*In Is.* lvii. 6. Note the wide sweep and range of the principle here asserted. In another place he writes, "Death shall come *as a visitor to the* "*impious*; it will *not be perpetual*; it will not annihilate "them; but will prolong its visit, *till the impiety which is* "*in them shall be consumed*."—*In Mic.* v. 8. Again speaking of the consummation of all things, S. JEROME says, on *Zeph.* iii. 10, "The prophet, here aware of the "extent of GOD'S mercy, is like the Psalmist communing

"with his heart and asking, 'will the LORD cast off for "ever?' of which the meaning is—I did think GOD would "abandon sinners for ever, but now I perceive that it was "all done for this end * * to *change everything*, and "that he might *shew mercy* on those whom *he had before* cast away." Other passages of similar tone will be found quoted from S. JEROME, on pp. 154-5, 156-7, and in ch. ix., sect. on Death and Judgment. No language can be more explicit than the foregoing; nor are these isolated instances: I have found *nearly* 40 *passages* in his various commentaries (and there are doubtless others) indicating S. JEROME'S sympathy with universalism, and how largely it enters into his system of teaching. Doubtless, like some Fathers already cited, he is not always consistent. Doubtless, too, he sought to retract, in part at least, what he had written. But *litera scripta manet*; and we must remember that *no hypothesis, other than belief on the writer's part, can account for passages teaching universalism* in any Father; while passages, seemingly or really inconsistent with it, admit of a ready explanation by the doctrine of Reserve or Economy, which, as I have said, *specially applied to this question.*

To these testimonies may be added that of FACUNDUS, a man of considerable eminence, Bishop of Hermiane, and chosen to represent the African Bishops at the council of Chalcedon, 451, A.D.

The following passage is interesting as showing that at this early date he and others regarded those who held the doctrine of the final salvation of all men, as most holy and glorious teachers; and also as proving how widely such views prevailed in the early Church. FACUNDUS says—"To all this is to be added the confession of DOMITIAN of "Galatia, formerly Bishop of Ancyra; for in the book "which he wrote to VIGILIUS * * he says, they have "hastily run out to anathematize most holy and glorious

"teachers, on account of those doctrines which have been "advanced concerning pre-existence and restitution, and "this, indeed, under pretext of ORIGEN, but thereby "anathematizing all those Saints, who were before and have "been after him."—*Pro. def. trium cap.* iv. 4.

To the evidence already given, may be added the language of several of the ancient Liturgies, in which prayer is offered, not alone for the faithful departed, but for *all* the dead, and for the salvation of the human race.

Thus in the liturgy, bearing the name of S. BASIL, are these words, "O LORD our GOD remember all THY people, "and pour out *on all* men THY rich mercy, granting *to all* "their petitions unto *salvation*; * * Be THOU THY-"SELF *all* things to *all* men." In the liturgy of S. MARUTHAS are these words, "Remember, O LORD, by THY "grace *all* those who, by means of the sentence pronounced "against our first Father, ADAM, have departed out of this "miserable life, and are gone where THOU only knowest; "* * give them *rest* among the delights, &c." Note how comprehensive is this prayer, and how completely it is in harmony with the larger hope for all men. Again, in the liturgy which bears S. CHRYSOSTOMS'S name, CHRIST is addressed as having "brought the *whole* world into HIS "net," "we offer to THEE this reasonable service for the "whole world." I give next a few brief sentences from the Malabar liturgy—CHRIST is said to "*quicken the whole world.*" Again, GOD is entreated "to have mercy on *all* "creatures; and the oblation is offered for the benefit of "all men." In the liturgy of S. CLEMENT, it is said in very suggestive phrase that GOD subjected man "for a "while to a temporary death," and "has bound HIMSELF "with an oath to restore him to life again," and that CHRIST came to deliver all men from the impending wrath. The Armenian liturgy prays to CHRIST, as having "borne and cancelled the sin of all, as having by HIS Cross

"*renewed all creatures*" (*Rom.* viii. 19-23). And to this day, in the Mass, each Roman Catholic priest offers *pro totius mundi salute*. The liturgy of the Holy Apostles prays thus, "Have mercy on *all creatures*, that all the inhabitants of the "earth may know THEE." The liturgy of S. JAMES has these prayers: "Visit *Thy world* in mercy and compassion, "Remember, O LORD, the spirits and *all flesh*; give them "rest, etc." Elsewhere it says, "CHRIST appeared for the "salvation of the race," "for all men and all women." The Ethiopic liturgy says: "We render thanks *de omnibus, pro "omnibus, et in omnibus*."

I will now ask my readers to consider another very important piece of evidence. Within the first five centuries, the two great Creeds—the Apostles' and the Niceno—Constantinopolitan, received their present form, and the first four General Councils were held at Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. Now it is a significant fact, that though universalist views were then widely prevalent, no syllable of condemnation was breathed against them at any of these councils. Nobody ever thought of including amongst the articles of the faith a belief in endless punishment; and this, be it remembered, through *the very question of the life to come, was distinctly raised* at Constantinople, in the clauses then added to the creed. I say, without fear of contradiction, that this silence would of itself, be an argument of irresistible weight in proving that universalism was, as an opinion, perfectly tenable in those days.

But this is a very small part of the evidence. If the

silence of these councils is significant, so are the following facts still more significant. We have the faith of the Church defined in two documents, of an authority in its kind quite unique and fundamental—the two Creeds* the Apostles', and that we call the Nicene. Rightly to estimate the weight of the testimony they bear, let us remember that in the second Great Ecumenical Council, where the Nicene Creed received its present shape, S. GREGORY, of Nazianzus, (whose opinions are above referred to) presided: while the chief agent in the task of adding to the Nicene Creed the new clauses then adopted; and ending with the significant words, "I believe in the "life of the world to come," (in the *life*, be it remembered, and *in nothing more*) was S. GREGORY of Nyssa; whose words quoted above, shew him to have been an unhesitating advocate of universal salvation What can be more significant of the belief of the Church in these primitive days? Look at the facts. To a known and outspoken believer in universal salvation is entrusted principally, by the Church in her Great Council, the duty of defining the faith; and that definition runs thus: "I believe in the life of the world "to come." *What but the larger hope*, could such words, under such circumstances, have conveyed to the Council? And mark the position these words occupy in the creed (as does the corresponding clause in the †Apostles' Creed). They close, and as it were, sum up the whole. The creed opens with a statement of belief in the Great Creator; it speaks of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: of the work of salvation: of the Incarnation, &c. But the great

* Whatever we may think of the Athanasian Creed—its comparatively late date—its uncertain origin—its doubtful acceptance in the East — when it speaks of "everlasting," that term can mean no more than the Scriptural *aionios*, which it represents; and as it is clear that everlasting is not the meaning of *aionios* (see *ch.* ix), this Creed is really quite consistent with the larger hope.

† On the great significance of the clause—the Descent into Hell—in this creed I have already spoken.

procession of the Christian verities ends, in both Creeds, in the expressive assertion of faith in everlasting life. It is as though both Creeds proclaimed—that to this all Christian truth led, in this all Christian hope culminated; in life, and not in death everlasting.

I have pointed out that many of the Fathers treat Death as a mode *of cure*, devised in mercy to mankind.—pp. 84-5. With this view is closely connected that opinion so little noticed, but so very suggestive which, as we have just seen, regards the Resurrection as in itself and to *all* men a restoration to blessedness.

It will make our enquiry into Patristic teaching more complete if I add now a few extracts from one or two of the Fathers, in which they speak of all the Divine punishments, as designed to heal. "GOD punishes," says CLEMENT of Alexandria, "for the benefit of those who are "punished."—*Strom.*, vii., 16. This doctrine CLEMENT repeats in passages too numerous for quotation. So too THEODORET—"He shews the reason of penalty, for the "LORD, who loves men, chastises in order to heal, like a "physician, that he may arrest the course of our sin."—*Hom. in Ezech., ch.* vi. "He who shall have despised the "cleansing of the word of GOD * * is keeping himself "for sad penal purification, that the flame of Gehenna may "purify in torment him, whom neither Apostolic doctrine, "nor Gospel preaching, have purified, according to that which is written. 'I will purify thee with fire for purifica-"tion.'"—ORIGEN, *Ad Rom.* So too, S. GREGORY of Nyssa: "Wherefore that at the same time liberty of free will "should be left to nature, and yet the evil be purged away; "the wisdom of GOD devised this plan to suffer man to do "as he would; that (having tasted the evils which he desired, "and having, by experience, learned for what misery he "had betrayed away the blessings he had), he might, of his "own free will, hasten back with desire to the first blessed-

"ness; either being purged in this life through prayer and "discipline, or, *after his departure hence*, through the "furnace of cleansing fire."—*Orat. pro. mort.* "Many "similar passages," says BINGHAM, ii., 782, "are to be found "in the Fathers." Perhaps I may be allowed again to refer to ch ix., sect. on Death and Judgment, for some interesting quotations from the Fathers bearing on this subject generally.

Again, some of the Fathers teach the ministry of CHRIST and his elect after death, to the departed.

So CLEMENT of Alexandria.—"The LORD preached the "Gospel also to them, who were in Hades. And HIS "Apostles, as they did here, so there (in Hades), too, "preached the Gospel to those of the heathen who were "ready to be converted."—*Strom* vi. He also uses similar language in *Strom* ii., and in both passages refers to HERMAS as teaching the same. JUSTIN MARTYR and IRENÆUS appears to have held this view. I need not point out how this teaching completely contradicts modern popular views of the state of the departed. Further it will be interesting, as shewing, at least, the total divergence of the Fathers' teaching from medieval and modern traditions, to note, that some few ancient Fathers held the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked, and not of their endless suffering, *e.g.*, I may name HERMAS, and probably JUSTIN MARTYR, ARNOBIUS, and IRENÆUS. So JUSTIN MARTYR says, "GOD ordained, that if obedient, man should partake "of immortal existence, but if he transgressed, the con- "trary should be his lot.—*Frag.*, xi. And elsewhere he speaks of the soul as a thing that may cease to exist, and may be blotted out.—*Dial. cum Try., ch.* v. ARNOBIUS seems to have held this view.—"For they, *i.e.*, certain souls, are "hurled down, and having been reduced to nothing, vanish "in the frustration of a perpetual destruction."—*Cont. gen.* ii. 14. And so, I think certainly, IRENÆUS teaches: in his view, "Continuance for ever is imparted to those who are

"saved," and the wicked "shall not receive length of days "for ever and ever."—*Cont. hær.*, ii. 34, and iii. 18, 19, 20. From IRENÆUS much more might be quoted to the same effect. But this opinion never seems to have spread, and probably died out at an early date.

I would here pause for a moment, and point out how varied are the proofs quoted, even in this brief survey of Patristic teaching —*e.g.*, Fathers, Creeds, Councils, Liturgies, Controversies, &c. Their force is thus cumulative ; the several lines, while independant, yet converge, and should bring with them an undoubted conviction of the wide-spread belief in universalism in the early Church. I may state the case in the words of a famous scholar. "The belief in the *inalienable* "*capability of improvement in all rational beings*, "*and the limited duration of future punishment*, "*was so general, even in the West, and among the* "*opponents of* ORIGEN, *that it seemed entirely* "*independant of his system.*"—*Gieseler, Eccles. hist.*, i. 212.

I feel persuaded that most writers have greatly underestimated the prevalence of universalism in primitive days. Take the following out of several facts that might be stated in proof of this. (*a.*) Down to the end of the fourth century, the School of Alexandria was the *sole* considerable centre of theological teaching. (*b.*) What the influence of Alexandria would be, may be gathered from the fact, that of its early presidents, no less than three— CLEMENT, ORIGEN, and DIDYMUS —were universalists. (*c.*) But the ascendency of ORIGEN extended far beyond the limits of any school: his influence was in fact for nearly two centuries after his death practically paramount. It

would leaven in the person of his converts, admirers, pupils, and readers nearly the whole of then existing Christendom; and even those who opposed his general system, did not, as we shall see, call in question his teaching of the larger hope. (*d.*) Further, when towards the close of the 4th century, the school of theology at Antioch arose, it, though widely differing in its principles, sympathised with Alexandria in its universalistic teaching, as did also that of CÆSAREA. (*e*) Nor should we forget the pressure constantly exerted in the direction of universalism by the Church's long-continued controversy with the numerous dualistic sects; a controversy which led the Catholic Fathers to maintain, that evil was not eternal, but would one day wholly cease: a view which is in fact universalism. (*f*). The careful reader will not fail to note another fact, viz., the extent to which universalism was carried by many Fathers, in their clear assertion of the salvation of all evil spirits. Now if this extreme form of the larger hope was openly avowed by teachers so Catholic as GREGORY of Nyssa, and many others, we may safely infer that in its modified form, as restricted to the human race, the adherents of universalism would be extremely numerous.*

* Nothing is more easy and *nothing more futile*, than for Dr. PUSEY to adduce passages from the Fathers, in which *aionios* and kindred terms are used of future punishment. What does this prove? It proves clearly something very embarrassing to those who maintain the ordinary creed. It proves that those Great Masters of Theology whose native tongue was Greek like ORIGEN and GREGORY, &c., did not attach to *aionios* and its *kindred phrases* any idea of endlessness. Doubtless, certain of the Fathers did teach endless punishment; but the mere use of *aionios* in this connection by any Father, does not even raise a presumption that he so taught; the word being perfectly indefinite in itself, and used by outspoken universalists. When all the facts are fully weighed, I must adhere to this as the fairest test of Patristic teaching, viz., that *no hypothesis other than strong conviction of its truth can account for universalistic teaching;* while the desire to terrify sinners, and still more the doctrine of Reserve easily accounts for apparent or even real inconsistency, which we sometimes find in the Fathers.

Fortunately we have the means of verifying our anticipations. We can call two witnesses to the diffusion of universalism whose testimony it is impossible to gainsay.

S. JEROME (and no more competent witness can exist), writing towards the end of the fourth century, says,—"I "know that most persons understand by the story of "Nineveh and its king, the *ultimate forgiveness of the Devil* "*and all rational creatures.*" Now if *most* believed the ultimate salvation of every evil spirit, ought we not to say that *all*, or nearly all, believed in the more moderate dogma of universal human salvation in S. JEROME'S day? But there is another witness of slightly later date and of equal weight. S. AGUSTINE tells us that, in his days, there were not only some, but "very many" or "the *majority*"—*quam plurimi* "who compassionated the eternal punishment of the "damned, and believed that it would not take place."—*Enchir., 112.* The significance of such testimonies is very great indeed. They place on record the all important fact, that universalism was the belief of half, *or more than half*, the Latin Church in the fifth century; and if so it would be far more widely held in the East, where the influence of the great Greek Fathers was more felt.

But any sketch of universalism would be incomplete, without a discussion of the assertion still repeated though often refuted, that the dogma of the final salvation of all men was condemned, in the person of ORIGEN, at the Fifth Council.

This assertion is, as will be distinctly shewn, untrue. An attempt was indeed made to procure a condemnation of this doctrine—an attempt which *wholly failed;* and which was made, not at the Fifth Council, but at the Home Synod of Constantinople (*i.e.*, a committee of Bishops from a small number of sees near Constantinople,

who, with some officers of the Metropolitan Church, formed a standing council for the Patriarch). For a clearer understanding of the facts, which are at once important, and very generally misunderstood; it must be premised that the larger hope was but a *very inconsiderable* part of what was known as 'Origenism,' and quite *independant* of it. Origenism meant a widely spreading system, embracing many fanciful and crude speculations on the Trinity; on pre-existence of souls; on cycles of probation; on personality; on the resurrection body; on the insecure bliss of the saved. These speculations it was that led ORIGEN into disrepute; and *not his belief in the final salvation of all men.* The proofs of this are abundant and decisive. i. Those who taught simple universalism even more decidedly than ORIGEN, *e.g.*, CLEMENT, of Alexandria, and GREGORY, of Nyssa, were held in universal honour. ii. The larger hope was, in fact, widely held by those who opposed ORIGEN in everything else. iii. We have several lists of the alleged errors of ORIGEN, from 300 down to 404, A.D., *in none of them is any mention of the larger hope.* I may instance the list of METHODIUS, 300, A.D., that given by PAMPHILUS and EUSEBIUS, in their Apology, 310, A.D.; that of EUSTATHIUS, 380, A.D.; two lists of EPIPHANIUS, 376 and 394, A.D.; and several of THEOPHILUS, about 400, A.D. The two last named *bitter enemies* of ORIGEN. iv.—So far from the larger hope, as we understand it, being something peculiar to ORIGEN, it is very doubtful if his doctrine of restoration did not mean a totally different thing, *i.e.*, restoration and then a fresh start, and the chance of again falling; and so on and on for ever. From what has been stated, it is absolutely certain that to condemn "ORIGEN," or "Origenism" is *not to condemn the larger hope.* I now turn to the facts of the asserted condemnation of ORIGEN, which are these:—In 541 the EMPEROR JUSTINIAN caused the Patriarch MENNAS to convene at Constantinople the *Home Synod*, expressly to condemn the larger hope, and certain other opinions of ORIGEN. "This "Synod passed fifteen Canons, in which various theories of "ORIGEN were condemned, but *deliberately omitted*" that

concerning the larger hope, *i.e.*, *deliberately refused to condemn it.* Twelve years later was convened the Fifth Council, (born in intrigue and unrecognised by the English Church). It is said, but the fact is disputed by many able and impartial writers, to have condemned ORIGEN by name in general terms, which, as I have shewn above, proves *nothing at all* as to the condemnation of the larger hope. Further, *special* reasons exist which render any intention to condemn universalism on the part of the Fifth Council in the highest degree unlikely. i. The promoters were themselves Origenists. ii. The object of the Council was to condemn certain Nestorian tenets, quite *distinct from universalism.* iii. The Council expressly referred to S. GREGORY of Nyssa, as a prop of the faith, who was the most outspoken universalist of all the Fathers! Such is the true story of the *so-called* condemnation of universalism. The Home Synod distinctly refused to condemn it, even at the Emperor's bidding, while if, as is doubtful,* the Fifth Council did condemn ORIGEN it *did not* thereby condemn the larger hope; nor am I aware that this special point was ever submitted to any ancient general council for decision.

I do not propose to follow the story of ancient universalism farther. In the middle of the fifth century we have seen excellent reason to conclude that it was the creed of more than half Christendom.

But darker days were at hand. The age of the great Greek Fathers was over, and in the centuries that succeed we have ignorance increasing, and manifold corruptions overspreading the earlier faith. Of these centuries a dismal picture might with truth be drawn—a venal clergy, a superstitious people, and ignorance abounding; so that probably in the West very few could so much as read the

* I have not space to state the reasons for these doubts.

Scriptures in the original. Add to all this the dark shadow of S. AGUSTINE'S cruel theology, then supreme; and we have enough to account for the adoption of a harsher and narrower creed as to the future life, by the Church in general. But this creed was *mercy itself compared* with our modern traditions, leaving as it did a door of hope widely open beyond the grave, to all but a very few exceptionally great sinners. Further, in estimating S. AUGUSTINE'S claim to decide on so momentous a question, let us remember that (i.) he was for most of his youth and early manhood, a profligate and a Manichee, traces of which latter are quite visible in his theological system, (ii.) was, it may be said, the *virtual* author of the cruel heresy of Calvinism, (iii.) was admittedly,—*Conf.* i., 14, imperfectly acquainted with Greek (a fact in itself an absolute disqualification for a teacher on this point)—iv., writes waveringly and feebly on the subject of future punishment.—See *Enchir.* lxvii, ix., cxii—*De civ. Dei*, xxi. Yet the earlier faith was by no means wholly dead. From amid the prevailing corruption and darkness, voices were still raised at intervals to proclaim the larger hope. A striking instance is that furnished by the case of the famous JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA, who in the ninth century, as the result of a careful study of the Greek Fathers, proclaimed *distinctly* the doctrine of universal salvation. Nor are later instances wanting "Both "ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, and DURANDUS shew us that, "even in their day, absolute universalism was not unknown. "It was the opinion of the school of GILBERT of Poictiers— "ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Sent.* iv. 45,—and 'aliquorum "juristarum'—DURANDAS,"—*Mercy and Judgment*, p. 45. Again, a great name, ST. ANSELM, in the twelfth century, writes thus: "It is quite foreign to GOD'S nature to suffer "any reasonable creature wholly to perish."—*Cur Deus Homo*, ii. 4, a striking proof of the survival of the earlier hope; "nor," adds the saint, "is it *possible* for the reason- "able mind to think otherwise." To these testimonies may be added a highly interesting prayer, quoted by the Dean of Wells from an old English manual, *The Fifteen O's*, published by CAXTON, and illustrating the dominant tone

of religious feeling in England, in the age immediately preceding the Reformation :—"Be merciful to those souls "for whom there is no hope * * in their torment, "save that they were made in thine image * * Put forth "thy right hand and *free them from the interminable pains* "*and anguish of hell*, and lead them to the fellowship of the "citizens on high."

No doubt some will say: but does not the very fact that this belief in an endless Hell was permitted to spread so widely prove its truth? If so, I reply, why not then carry out your theory? Is transubstantiation true because it has prevailed so widely? Papal infallibility is a belief very widely spread; is it therefore to be accepted? The cultus of the Blessed Virgin is very wide spread; is it therefore Scriptural? Instances without end might be added. In fact, no more groundless belief can be pointed out than this, that the prevalence of an opinion is a proof of its truth. Are they who hold this strange opinion prepared to join the Church of Rome, and accept the supremacy of the Pope, because this belief is that of the vast majority of Christians in the Western Church? It has pleased GOD to permit in numberless cases error to prevail, and obscure in this present age HIS truth. This very fact is but a louder call to us to work against all that hides or distorts that truth. Nay, it points not uncertainly to a conclusion in perfect agreement with the larger hope; this namely, that the present is but an initial stage of being; one of many ages, during which

GOD is slowly, very slowly, working out a vast plan, and permits for a moment, as it were, an apparent triumph to error and to evil.

Let us now pass on and see what our own Church teaches on this point. We shall I think find, if we examine it carefully, in our Book of Common Prayer—moulded as it is on primitive lines—not a few testimonies in favour of the larger hope. Go, for instance, into any of our Churches at the service of Holy Baptism—what is the profession of faith required from the sponsors, how does it end? "Dost thou believe "in everlasting life after death," and not a *word or hint further*. How suggestive, is it not?

Again, in our Litany do we not pray that it may please GOD to have mercy, not on some men, but on *all men?* Is this not the larger hope? Do we not also address, in the same Litany, JESUS CHRIST as the "Lamb of GOD that "taketh away the sins of the world," and that twice over? Do we not in Holy Communion repeat, *three* times in one prayer, this touching and truly Catholic address to CHRIST, as "taking away the sins of the world?" And here it is right to ask, are words mere counters, a mere pretence, and that in our holiest moments? How does CHRIST *take away* the sins of the world, if to all eternity in Hell the sins of any men remain not taken

away? On this point our Book of Common Prayer is specially emphatic, for in the proper preface for Easter-day we are bidden to remember how CHRIST "*hath taken away* the sins of the "world; and has by HIS death *destroyed death.*" But to abolish death in its Scriptural meaning is surely to abolish all that the Fall brought on man. Take next another instance: in one of her Ember-day collects, the Church bids us thus pray: "To those who shall be ordained to any "holy function, grant Thy grace that they may "set forth Thy glory, and set forward the "salvation of all men." Does the salvation of *all* men mean the damnation of *most men;* of *any* man? Again, I need not remind you how we pray "for all sorts and conditions of men; that "GOD'S saving health may reach all nations." And so too, when the Church bids us render thanks for a world redeemed, and for our creation, no less than for our redemption, how can this be if creation be not a certain promise of good? If creation does, as a matter of fact, imply an awful unutterable risk of Hell's torment, why bid a man give thanks for that which may be to him an occasion of endless pains?

I will next ask your attention to a fact perhaps not always remembered, that our Church deliberately expunged that article of hers which (adopted in 1552) condemned the belief in the final salvation of all men. "The 42nd article "was withdrawn," (says the Bishop of Manchester) "because the Church, knowing, that men like ORIGEN, "CLEMENT, and GREGORY of Nyssa, were universalists,

"refused to dogmatise on such questions." Nor are other indications wanting of the hopeful teaching of our Prayer Book. Let us not fail to note the hope expressed for *all* in the Burial Service; the stress laid on the wide extent of the Atonement in the Catechism, and in the General Confession; the true force of all this is best seen when our formularies are compared with those of other reformed communions, (a comparison for which I have not space). In a word the tone of the Book of Common Prayer is frequently that indicated in the Collect for the Sunday before Easter—where the object of CHRIST'S death is described as this: "That *all mankind* should follow the "example of HIS great humility," and in that other prayer, which addresses GOD as one "whose property is *always* to "have mercy;" words which, if taken in their full meaning, certainly teach the larger hope.

But there is further important evidence of our Church's teaching. Of CHRIST'S descent into Hades I have already spoken, and pointed out that to teach the liberation of *all* souls thence, is to teach universalism.

And this liberation of *all*, it can, I think, be shewn that our Church teaches: For the Church has intimated her belief in the fact of CHRIST'S descent into Hades, and preaching there, by the selection of *St. Peter*, iii. 16, as the epistle for Easter Eve, and of *Zech.* ix., as the first lesson (see v. 11, and its striking allusion to the "prisoners of "hope.") Further in the Homily (*of the Resurrection*) appointed for Easter Day, we have the result of CHRIST'S preaching in Hades stated in the following words:—"He "destroyed the Devil and *all* his tyranny, and took from "him *all his captives*, and hath raised and set them *with* "*Himself among the heavenly citizens* above. His death "*destroyed Hell and all the damnation thereof.*" These words are, as I think, clear, and teach the liberation of *all*

souls, without exception, from Hades: a point plainly equivalent to asserting Universalism.—(See page 80). Lastly let me call attention to a serious point arising out of the Atonement. *Art.* xxxi. says, "The offering of CHRIST "is a perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for "all the sins of the whole world." But if *all the sins of the whole world have been perfectly atoned for*, how can any of these sins be eternally punished? CHRIST either did satisfy all claims by HIS death or HE did not. If HE did, what becomes of the popular creed? How can sins already atoned for, and taken away be visited with endless retribution? If HE did not, what becomes of the Atonement?

Nor has the larger hope wanted able defenders in English theology since the days of the Prayer Book. It is interesting to note that amid the tumults of the Rebellion and the gross profligacy of the Restoration, there rose and flourished a school of devout men, trained, most of them, at Cambridge; partly Anglican, partly Nonconformists, who advocated the larger hope. One of the earliest was GERALD WINSTANLEY, who taught a complete restoration of the whole creation in the *Mystery of God*, printed 1669. To nearly the same epoch belong two very remarkable names, RALPH CUDWORTH and HENRY MORE, whose sympathies were distinctly in favour of the larger hope. More out-spoken in his teaching was PETER STERRY, fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge—one of CROMWELL'S chaplains—whose works published (after his death) in 1683 and 1710, evidence marked ability, and are now of great rarity and

value. I may note next, as of the same school of thought, SADLER, author of *Olbia*, and WHICHCOTE, a friend of CUDWORTH and MORE, a fellow of Emmanuel College, a contemporary of MILTON and JEREMY TAYLOR; and two less known authors, R. COPPIN, 1655, and W. ERBURY. At this time there also appeared not a few anonymous books, advocating the wider hope, which deserve mention, as illustrating the course of theological enquiry in the 17th century, *e.g.*, *Enochian walks with God*, and *The revelation of the everlasting gospel message*, by the same author; and *God's light*, 1653; also *Of the torments of Hell, the foundation shaken*, 1658. A more distinguished advocate of the larger hope was Bishop RUST, successor of JEREMY TAYLOR, author of *De veritate*, and *A letter concerning the opinions of Origen.* Another name almost equally eminent is that of JEREMY WHITE, Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge, chaplain to CROMWELL, and author of *The restoration of all things*, published (after his death) in 1712; a book, I may add, eloquent, devout, and breathing the deepest reverence for Holy Scripture. Towards the close of the 17th century, came TILLOTSON, who seems to have held that GOD was not bound to execute his threatenings pronounced against sinners, a view in which he was followed more decisively by Bishop STILLINGFLEET, and by Dr. BURNET, Master of the Charter House, a pupil of his at Cambridge, who, in his

De statu mortuorum, teaches universalism openly. A few years later we meet some distinguished names advocating distinctly the same views, Dr. CHEYNE, in his *Discourses*, published 1742, and (probably) Bishop WARBURTON.—See ch. vi. note on *Rev.* xx. iv., Bishop NEWTON, 1750, in a sermon on the *Final state of man*; and WILLIAM LAW, 1766, in his *Letters* and *Way to Divine knowledge*. To this era belong also two books, little known, *De vitâ functorum statu*, by J. WINDET, and *Glad tidings to Jews and Gentiles*, by R. CLARKE, both published in 1763, and both advocating the larger hope. Later still are the names of ELHANAN WINCHESTER, a follower of * WESLEY, author of *Dialogues on universal restoration*, and (in the earlier part of the present century) that of T. ERSKINE, of Linlathan. To these may be added Bishop EWING, of Argyll, C. KINGSLEY, F. D. MAURICE, C. BRONTE, JOHN FOSTER, E. B. BROWNING, General GORDON, and the late Bishop WILBERFORCE, (fide Canon FARRAR). Of living divines not a few of the most distinguished might be added to the list just given, as sympathizing with, or openly teaching

* There is some strong evidence connecting J. WESLEY's latest views with universalistic teaching. He published in 1787 as "one "of the *most sensible tracts* he had ever read," a translation from BONNET'S *Palingenesie Philosophique*. which seems to be characterised by an outspoken universalism. *e.g.*. it teaches "There will "be a perpetual advance of *all the individuals of humanity* towards "perfection" (in the other life.).

universalism. One eminent name will occur to most, that of Canon WESTCOTT, and another is the present Bishop of Manchester.

The evidence already given shows at least that the Catholic Church leaves her children perfectly free on this question of universalism, which so many of her most eminent sons openly taught. And let us carefully note, 1—that the Patristic evidence in favour of the larger hope is stronger in the early centuries than in the later; 2—is stronger in the days of the Fathers than of the Schoolmen; 3—is stronger in the great Greek Fathers than in the Latins; is stronger where the light of learning and piety is the brightest, is weaker as both decline; 4—nor does the belief in an endless Hell become general, until the light of learning was quite extinct in the Church; 5—and even then it was so completely tempered by the doctrine of Purgatory as to have lost, practically, nearly all its terror. In truth there is incontrovertible evidence of the wide-spread belief in universalism in the earliest centuries: proof equally clear that the Catholic Church has nowhere condemned it: and abundant reason to think that these views were often held, where no open expression of them was made; and even where, owing to the doctrine of Reserve, language apparently inconsistent with them was held in public. "Of "course," writes Cardinal NEWMAN, "I was

"aware that *several* of the Fathers are in favour "of the restitution of all things." Of the first five centuries, Mr. OXENHAM thus writes: "The "doctrine of endless punishment was not believed "at all by some of the holiest and wisest of the "Fathers, and was not taught as an integral "part of the Christian faith by any even of those "who belived it as an opinion." "In primitive "Christianity," says DŒDERLIN, "the more lofty "and eminent the teacher, the more he held and "defended the hope that punishments would one "day end."

Here I had intended to close this chapter, but so very little is known of Patristic teaching that some readers will, no doubt, welcome a few more extracts, chiefly from S. GREGORY of Nyssa, to shew how uncompromising was primitive universalism—a universalism which extended to the ultimate salvation of every fallen angel and evil spirit; and which he taught as in the very fullest harmony with the Catholic Faith, of which he was, perhaps, the most distinguished champion in his day. Writing on the 54th *Ps.* v. 17., "In these words," he says, "Is declared the object of the Divine plan with "regard to mankind. GOD's aid suffered not man "to remain in the confines of Hades, but * pro- "vided a remedy equal to the pains of sin. * In "this, hinting at a very glorious truth that evil is "not eternal * * by which GOD shews that

"neither is sin from eternity, *nor will it last to* "*eternity.* For that which did not always exist "shall *not* last for ever; and the manner in which "evil is abolished is shewn by the Jews slaying "our LORD, which predicts the abolition of sin. "* * * The LORD will, in his just judgement, "destroy the wickedness of sinners; *not their* "*nature*; * * * *wickedness being thus des-* "*troyed*, and its imprint being *left in none*, we "shall *all* be fashioned after CHRIST, and in *all* "that one character shall shine, which originally "was imprinted on our nature." My readers cannot fail to note in this interesting passage these amongst other points. 1. The assertion that from its very nature evil cannot endure for ever. 2. The declaration which S. GREGORY delights to make of the certain reversion of our nature (in every case) to its original type, *i.e.*, to conformity to the image of GOD. 3. The teaching as to GOD's judgement, being the destruction not of the sinner but of his sin: a point on which S. JEROME, too, is emphatic, as the following quotation from him shews:—"When the "Psalmist says, 'Thine enemies, O GOD, shall "perish,' * *every one* who has been thine enemy "shall *hereafter be made thy friend*; the man "shall not perish, the enemy shall perish. He "who was an enemy shall be thy friend, and so "the enemy shall perish."—*In Ps.* 91. On these points let us hear S. GREGORY once more, writing on *Ps.* vii. 6, "Arise, O LORD, in thy

"wrath, and exult over the end of thine "enemies" (so the words run in S. GREGORY'S text), "The term 'wrath,'" he says, "shews "the retributive power of the just judge, and "for the rest the *extinction of sin*: for that alone "is contrary to nature which is seen to be "opposed to good, which is sin, whose end is "*extinction* and *a return to nothingness*." He then goes on to explain that to put an end to the enemies of GOD, means not to allow to human life any power of turning to evil; "For as the "end of disease is health, so here the Psalmist "calls the change of the nature of *mankind, from* "*evil to a state of blessedness, the end of (God's)* "*enemies*." Here let us notice the stress laid on *wrath*, *justice*, and *retribution*, and the conclusion so strictly drawn, that these involve the termination of sin. As S. JEROME, in a passage already quoted, puts it thus, "Seeing the spirit "(of man) proceeds from GOD, it is *not just* that "they should perish eternally who are sustained "by HIS breath and spirit."

Again S. GREGORY writes on the 56th *Psalm*. "For the "nature of sin is unstable and *transitory* * * nor shall it "last for ever in the universe. * * It is like a plant on a "house top, not *rooted*, not sown, not ploughed in, and "though for the present it may thrive with its unsubstantial "shoot, yet in the times to come, in the restoration to "goodness of all things, it passes away and vanishes. So "not *even a trace of the evil which now* abounds in us shall "remain, in the life that is promised as an object of our "hope. So, too, writing on *Psalm* cvii. 42; "And all "iniquity shall stop her mouth," this Father says, "How

"blessed is that life in which the mouth of iniquity shall be "for ever stopped. This is the crown of all blessings, the "head of all hope * * that nature shall no longer be "troubled by wickedness, but that *all* transgression shall "be put away; that is to say, the very inventor of trans- "gression (the Devil). For this is signified by the com- "prehensive word *all*."

Again, on *Psalm* cl. 5. "Praise HIM upon the high- "sounding cymbals," there is a very striking comment. "These cymbals," he says, "joined with cymbals, show "the (future) harmony between the human and the angelic "natures, when human nature shall have attained its end. "One cymbal is the heavenly nature of the angels. The "other is the rational creation of mankind; but sin "separated the one from the other, which, when at last the "goodness of GOD shall have united, then shall both, made "one, chant forth that hymn, as the great Apostle says, "'*Every* tongue, of things in Heaven, and on earth, and "under the earth, shall confess that CHRIST is LORD, to the "glory of GOD the Father.' Which done, the cymbals "shall chant their song of victory * * all enmity "being extinguished; which being *wholly* * * *ex-* "*tinguished* and *reduced* to *nothingness*, ceaselessly shall be "rendered by *every spirit alike*, praise to GOD *for ever*: "in that day, as there shall *be no longer any sinner* (sin no "more existing), *every spirit* must then praise the Lord." S. GREGORY proceeds, "Such is the meaning of this final "*Psalm*, in which *all sins being wholly abolished*, praise "shall be sung to GOD; which praise alike contains (implies) "our being *incapable* of turning to sin, and unites our song "with GOD'S glory; *when every created being* shall *be* "*harmonised into one choir*, and when, like a cymbal, the "reasonable creation, and that which is now severed by sin, "shall pour forth a pleasing strain, due to mutual harmony. "* * Then shall *every spirit praise God for ever*, pro- "claiming HIS grace and abounding with an increase of "joy to all eternity."

CHAPTER V.

"*WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT TEACHES.*"

"From the time at which this great and far-reaching promise "or gospel was given to ABRAHAM, the universal scope of the Divine "redemption is insisted on with growing emphasis, even in those "Hebrew Scriptures, which we too often assume to be animated only "by a local and national spirit."—*Salvator Mundi*.

From the Church I next turn to the Old Testament. There we shall find abundant, perhaps to many readers, unexpected confirmation of the larger hope, though I can merely attempt to give an outline, and that a brief one, of its teaching. True, in the Old Testament, the promises are, it may be said, mainly temporal; but still we have unmistakeable evidence of a plan of mercy revealed in its pages, and destined to embrace all men. Nor need this interpretation of the older volume of GOD's word rest on mere conjecture: let me call as a witness, no less a person than the Apostle S. PETER. He shall tell us what the true teaching of the Old Testament on this subject is. The Apostle in one of the very earliest of his addresses, *Acts* iii. 21, takes occasion to explain the real purpose of GOD in JESUS CHRIST. There is to come, finally, a time of universal restoration, "restitution of *all*

"things." He adds the significant words that GOD has promised this "by the mouth of all "HIS holy Prophets since the world began;" and therefore we who teach this hope are but following in the steps of all GOD's holy Prophets. Thus S. PETER would have us go to the Old Testament, and weave, as it were its varied predictions into one concordant whole: gather its sacred promises till they, with one voice, proclaim the restitution of all things.

It is not my design minutely to consider the varied promises of blessing to all men contained in the Old Testament, though they can be traced almost everywhere. At the very moment of the fall, is given a promise, that the serpent's head shall be bruised, intimating a complete overthrow. Two points are very significant here. The promise is not of the serpent's wounding, but of his destruction; and next the promise, so far reaching, is conveyed in close connection with a terrible judgement (see ch. ix. on Judgement). It is part of the sentence, it is embedded, so to speak, in it. Further, with the promise to ABRAHAM was blended an intimation of blessing to the race of man; to all the families of the earth. And this intimation of a world-wide blessing, as has been often pointed out, grows more frequent as the stream of revelation flows on. We find that in the Law, the Psalms, and

the Prophets, are traces, clear and distinct of universal blessing of hope for all. Thus of the teaching of the Law a fundamental part rested on the institutions of the 'first fruits,' and the 'first born.' Elsewhere in this volume has been pointed out the extreme significance of this as bearing on the larger hope, and as fulfilled in JESUS CHRIST. For the 'first fruits' pledge the entire harvest ("if the first fruit be holy the lump is also holy"—*Romans* xi. 16), and the 'first born' include the entire family, and not a part merely. But CHRIST is the 'first born', and the 'first fruits', and thus sums up in HIMSELF, not a part of the race, but the entire race. In other words, CHRIST as the 'first born,' stands pledged to see every son of ADAM'S race; as the 'first fruits,' to save the entire harvest. So are HIS elect said to be "a kind of 'first fruits'" and the 'first born' ("Israel is my son, even my 'first born'"); and therefore in their salvation is renewed pledge of the salvation of the entire human race, without any exception; thus, too, light falls on the true meaning of the Divine election as carrying with it a pledge of universal salvation.

"The Psalmists again are full of the largest "and happiest forecasts. When they speak of the "coming Messiah, they are at the farthest from "claiming the blessings of HIS reign exclusively "for themselves; on the contrary, they say, 'HIS

"name shall endure for ever: HIS name shall be "continued as long as the sun; and men shall "be blessed in HIM; *all* nations shall call HIM "blessed' * * "They constantly breathe forth "the invitation, 'O praise the Lord *all* ye "nations; praise HIM *all* ye people."—*Salvator Mundi*, p. 178. Let me further instance such words as these, "unto THEE shall *all* flesh come." Other examples of the same address to all nations—to all peoples—bidding them join in GOD'S praise, and surely anticipating that they would one day do so, are frequent in the Psalms. Take for example those our Prayer Book has made familiar, *e.g. Cantate Domino.* It is not alone the house of Israel that shares GOD'S mercy and truth, but *all the ends of the world* are declared to have seen the salvation of our GOD—see *Is.* xi. 5—and so in the next verse *all* lands are bidden to shew themselves joyful unto the Lord. To the same effect is the familiar clause of the Jubilate, "O be joyful in the Lord "*all* ye lands." In fine, in this spirit the Psalter closes with the noble, far-sounding strain, "let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord." In this universal hope is to be found the true spirit of the Psalmists, in these invitations addressed, not to Israel, but to all nations.

To shew how deeply this idea is embedded in the *Psalter*, let me add a few more passages. "All nations shall do HIM service."—*Ps.* lxxii.

11. "THOU shalt inherit *all* the nations."—*Ps.* lxxxii. 8. "*All* nations shall come and worship "THEE."—*Ps.* lxxxvi. 9. "*All* the earth shall "worship THEE."—*Ps.* lxvi. 4. "Sing unto the "Lord *all the whole earth.*"—*Ps.* xcvi. 1. "*All* "the earth shall be filled with HIS Majesty."—*Ps.* lxxii. 19. "Let *all* flesh give thanks unto "HIS holy name, for ever and ever."—*Ps.* cxlv. 21. Lastly, take these words—"*All* the ends of "the world shall remember and turn unto the "Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall "worhip before THEE."—*Ps.* xxii. 27.*

Of the greater Prophets the same is true; though I need not speak in detail of them. From amid their varied contents, at times break forth promises of the widest, amplest hope; anticipations of a time of universal bliss and joy, of a world in which all pain and sorrow shall have passed away. But these passages are in the main familiar to you, and I need hardly quote them. They have found the way to the heart of Christendom, and have stamped themselves on its literature. "Take, however, only this one "sentence from the evangelical Prophet, and "take it mainly because S. PAUL echoes it back, "and interprets it as he echoes it. It is Jehovah

* This text has a special significance on account of the close connection of this Psalm with the Atonement; as a result of which all the ends of the world shall turn as it predicts unto the Lord.

"who speaks these words by the mouth of "ISAIAH: 'Look unto ME and be ye saved, all "ye ends of the earth: for I am GOD and there "is none other: I have sworn by myself and "the word is gone out of my mouth in righteous-"ness and shall not return, that unto me every "knee shall bow and every tongue confess.' "Could any words more emphatically declare "it to be the divine purpose that the *whole earth*, "to the very end of it shall be saved; that every "knee shall bend in homage before GOD, and "every tongue take the oath of fealty to HIM? "Are we not expressly told that this declaration, "since it has come from the righteous mouth of "GOD, cannot return unto HIM void, but must "accomplish its object; that object being the "salvation of the human race? S. PAUL echoes "this great word in the epistle to the Philippians, "and though on his lips it gains definiteness and "precision, assuredly it loses no jot or tittle of its "breadth: he affirms, *Phil.* ii. 9-11, 'That GOD "hath highly exalted HIM, and given HIM a "name which is above every name, in order that "at the name of JESUS every knee shall bow; "not only every knee of man—for now the "promise grows incalculably wider—but every "knee in Heaven and on earth, and under the "earth: and that every tongue shall confess that "JESUS CHRIST is Lord, to the glory of GOD the "Father.' It is hard to understand ISAIAH as "proclaiming less than a universal redemption,

"but if S. PAUL did not mean to proclaim a "redemption as wide as the universe, what use or "force is there in words?"—*Salvator Mundi.*

And remember how full are the Prophets, and the *Psalms* no less, of pictures of the vastness of the divine mercy, of HIS tenderness that never fails. Even from amid the sadness of the *Lamentations* we hear a voice assuring us that "GOD will *not cast off for ever*, but though HE "cause grief, yet will HE have compassion "according to the multitude of HIS mercies."—*Lam.* iii. 31. Or take these words of ISAIAH: "I will not contend for ever, neither will I be "*always wroth!* for the spirit should fail before "me, or the souls which I have made."—*Isaiah* lvii. 16. This idea is a favourite one; the contrast between the short duration of GOD'S anger and the enduring *eternal character of His love.* "So in a little wrath I hid my face from "thee for a moment, but with *everlasting* kind-"ness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord "Thy Redeemer."—*Is.* liv. 8. Let us pause here for a moment to dwell on the significance of this fact of the limited duration of the divine anger, so clearly taught in the Old Testament. Take a few instances, "I am merciful saith the Lord, I "will not keep anger for ever."—*Jer.* iii. 12. "HIS anger endureth but a moment."—*Ps.* xxx. 5. "HE will not always chide neither "keepeth HE HIS anger for ever."—*Ps.* ciii. 9.

"HE retaineth not HIS anger for ever, because "HE delighteth in mercy."—*Mic.* vii. 18. But if this be true *what becomes of the popular creed?* If GOD'S anger is temporary, how can it be endless? If it endure but a moment how can it last for ever?

We have spoken of the pictures of universal blessedness that are to be found in the greater Prophets, "perhaps," says the author already quoted, "some of you may not be equally "familiar with the fact that these same pictures "are also to be found in the minor prophets;" (a fact very suggestive) that "every one of these "brief poems, or collections of poems, has its tiny "Apocalypse. And mark this point well, while "each of the minor Prophets sees the vision "of a whole world redeemed to the love and "service of righteousness, this vision of redemp-"tion is invariably accompanied by a *vision of* "*judgement.*" The significance of this will be seen when we come in a later chapter (ch. ix.) to discuss what the true meaning is of these divine judgements, which are too often regarded as merely implying GOD'S wrath.

At least, if not all, yet very many of the minor Prophets do predict the coming of a time universal redemption. So HOSEA xiii. 14, exclaims, "O death, I will be thy plagues. O grave, I will

"be thy destruction."—(See 1 *Cor.* xv. 55.). So JOEL ii. 28, tells of the spirit as being poured upon *all* flesh. HABBUKUK can look beyond the terrors of judgement and see the "*earth* filled "with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, "as the *waters cover the sea.*"—ch. ii. 14. Is not this wonderful? Can you not enter into S. PETER'S words as he stood forth, while yet Christianity was scarcely born, to proclaim as its glorious aim and scope, the universal restoration —the paradise of GOD regained for mankind—all things made new—*Acts* iii. 21.

But I resume. In ZEPHANIAH we read the same glorious prospect, the same universal hope. He speaks of GOD'S judgements as being terrible to the nations, in order that "men may worship "HIM, *every one* from his place, even *all the isles* "*of the heathen.*"—ch. ii. 11. And again, in the same Prophet, we are told how GOD is to send HIS fiery judgements to purify men, "that they "may *all* call upon the name of the LORD to "serve HIM with one consent" (ch. iii. 8-9). So MALACHI closes the prophetic line with an intimation indeed of judgement—of a refining fire—but together with this, nay, in consequence of this, is the prospect unfolded, that from the "*rising of the sun unto the going down of the* "*same*, GOD'S name shall be great among the "Gentiles, and in *every* place incense and pure "offerings shall be offered to HIM."—Ch. i. 11.

Brief as the above survey has been, it has, I trust, served to indicate how, through all the Old Testament, the thread of *universal* hope runs: how the Prophets—Seers and Psalmists—of Israel did foreshadow a coming age; when sin should be no more, and sorrow and sighing should flee away for ever. To the New Testament I propose to devote an examination more in detail, as its great importance demands, in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

"*WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES.*"

"And here I may briefly say, that to my own mind, the language "of the New Testament appears *unequivocally to affirm the redemption* "*of all men;* their actual redemption from this evil and diseased "state in which we now are; the actual raising up of all to a per-"fect life. To my own mind this *universality* seems to be clearly "expressed in Scripture."—HINTON, *The Mystery of Pain.*

We now turn to an examination of the very numerous passages in the New Testament which clearly declare, or imply, the salvation of all men: how numerous these are, how distinct their teaching, we shall see. One thing only I ask, which common fairness and honesty require, that our Lord and HIS Evangelists and Apostles may be understood to *mean what they say*. Thus, to take a few instances out of many: when they speak of all men I assume them to mean all men, and not some men; when they speak of all things I assume them to mean all things; when they speak of life and salvation as given to the world, I assume them to mean given, and not merely offered; when they speak of the destruc-

tion of death, of the Devil, of the works of the Devil, I assume them to mean that these shall be destroyed and not preserved for ever in Hell; when they tell us that the whole of creation suffers but that it shall be delivered, I assume they mean an actual deliverance of all created things; when they tell us that Redemption is wider, broader, and stronger than the Fall, I assume that they mean to tell us at least this, that all the evil caused by the Fall shall be swept away; when they describe CHRIST'S empire as extending over all things and all creatures, and tell us that every tongue must join in homage to HIM, I assume them to mean what their words convey in their ordinary sense; if I did not, should I not, in fact, be making GOD a liar?

"FOR THE SON OF MAN IS COME TO SAVE THAT WHICH IS LOST." *S. Matt.* xviii. 11.

Now the question is simply this, will JESUS CHRIST do what HE has come to do? Will HE save *that which is lost*, and not *some of the lost merely, a totally different thing?* How can "the "lost" be saved, if countless myriads, as the popular creed teaches, shall be finally lost? nay, if any are finally lost, surely "that which is lost" is not saved.

"THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO LEAVEN WHICH A WOMAN TOOK AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF MEAL TILL THE WHOLE WAS LEAVENED."—*S. Mat.* xiii. 33; *S. Luke* xiii. 20-1.

Here is a passage which assuredly teaches a

universal salvation. The Kingdom of Heaven is set on this earth as leaven in meal; and as the leaven works till the whole mass is leavened, so the Kingdom of Heaven is destined to leaven the whole earth, *i.e.*, to save all men. You cannot limit the "meal" of the parable in any way, it is the whole world that CHRIST claims as HIS Kingdom; of the world HE is the light, the life, the Saviour. All things are HIS and all souls, and all that CHRIST claims—"*the whole*" —shall one day be leavened.

"ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD. *S. Luke* iii. 5.

Quoted from ISAIAH; he says speaking of redemption, ch. xl., "Every valley shall be "exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be "made low, and the glory of the Lord shall be "revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Can you fairly reconcile these words with a partial salvation? Thus when the Prophet says in the same chapter, verse 6, "all flesh is grass," who doubts the universality of his words; and if so, is it not a violation of all fairness in an exactly parallel case, to doubt the universality of the salvation?

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, DO GOOD TO THEM WHICH HATE YOU * AND YE SHALL BE THE CHILDREN OF THE HIGHEST."—*S. Luke* vi. 27-35; *S. Mat.* v. 44.

Note carefully the teaching of this whole passage. Shall GOD command us to love our

enemies when HE prepares an endless Hell for HIS own enemies? Shall GOD command us to bless and do good to those who hate us, when HE means for ever to curse and do evil to those who hate HIM? Does GOD then expect us to act on higher motives than He will HIMSELF act?

"BUT WHEN A STRONGER THAN HE SHALL COME UPON HIM AND OVERCOME HIM, HE TAKETH FROM HIM ALL HIS ARMOUR, WHEREIN HE TRUSTED AND DIVIDETH HIS SPOILS." *S. Luke* xi. 22.

Here it is asserted (*a*) that Christ is stronger than Satan, (*b*) that CHRIST will overcome Satan, (*c*) will take from him his *whole* armour, (*d*) will divide, *i.e.*, take away his spoils, see p. 80-1. Each of these statements contradicts the popular creed, for that teaches (*a*) that evil is stronger than good, (*b*) that it overcomes good in numberless cases, (*c*) that Satan's power for evil is not taken away, but lasts practically for ever, (*d*) that his spoils—the souls he has captured—are not divided *i.e.*, taken from him.

"WHAT MAN OF YOU HAVING AN HUNDRED SHEEP * IF HE LOSE ONE OF THEM DOTH NOT LEAVE THE NINETY AND NINE * AND GO AFTER THAT WHICH IS LOST UNTIL HE FIND IT?"—*S. Luke* xv. 4.

"Yes," says a writer already quoted, as long "as there is one member of the race imperfect, "the shepherd parent is persuing it in love until "it be safely rested on his shoulders; and all "the rest of mankind are crying out for the "missing member, without which their own life

"does not fully or freely vibrate." See how broadly CHRIST puts the case. It was to *all* the *publicans and sinners*, v. 1, that HE was speaking lest we might narrow HIS precious words to a few elect. And again, see how broadly HE bases HIS argument, "what man of you," HE asks "would not do this?" As though to assure us that in the common feeling of humanity, shared by even publicans and sinners, we have safe warrant to conclude that our Father will seek on and on till HE find *every* erring child. Lastly, note how the straying sheep is represented as being the shepherd's loss. When man strays GOD is the loser, and GOD in seeking man is trying to retrieve HIS own loss.

"WHAT WOMAN HAVING TEN PIECES OF SILVER, IF SHE LOSE ONE PIECE, DOTH NOT LIGHT A CANDLE AND * SEEK DILIGENTLY TILL SHE FIND IT?" *S. Luke* xv. 8.

Here is precisely the same broad human basis, and the same idea, the sense of loss is that of the owner *i.e.*, GOD. Keep steadily in view three facts, which distinctly emerge from these parables: 1—our own feelings of love and pity are a safe guide to GOD'S feelings; "what man of you?" 2—every lost soul is GOD'S loss, who therefore may be trusted to seek its recovery; and 3—to seek *till He find it.*

"FOR THE SON OF MAN IS COME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST."—*S. Luke* xix. 10.

If so, I gather from HIS own parables, and

His essential nature, that so long as *any thing is lost*, JESUS CHRIST will go on seeking and saving; for is HE not always the same? "The lost" are HIS charge, and not some of the lost, a very different thing, as I have before said. Shall any thing separate any lost one from HIS love? Is HE not Lord of the dead as truly as of the living? Did HE not go from the bitter Cross to the lost spirits in prison, to preach, as S. PETER tells us, the Gospel to *the dead.*

"THE SAME CAME * * THAT ALL MEN THROUGH HIM MIGHT BELIEVE." *S. John* i. 17.

Yes, that *all* men might believe, that is indeed the Divine purpose—the purpose of HIM who sent the Baptist. But who is there that shall say, that what GOD purposes to do HE will fail to accomplish? I know that HE cannot fail: I read distinctly of the *immutability* of HIS counsel *(Heb.* vi. 17). Am I to believe that the immutable purpose of the unchanging GOD shall come to nothing?

"BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD." *S. John* i. 29.

How could the extent of the work of CHRIST be more distinctly intimated? It is the world's sin, and not less, that he takes away. But, if it is *taken away* how can there be an endless Hell for its punishment? Is all this merely playing with words? Have we come to asserting that of GOD's word?

"FOR GOD SENT NOT HIS SON INTO THE WORLD TO CONDEMN THE WORLD; BUT THAT THE WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED."—*S. John* iii. 17.

Again, the same plain statement, as to the *world's* salvation and GOD's purpose to save it; and again I ask, are we to believe GOD when HE tells us that HIS purpose in Redemption is the salvation of the world; and assures us by HIS Prophets that HIS word shall not return unto HIM void, but shall accomplish that which HE pleases.

"THE FATHER LOVETH THE SON, AND HATH GIVEN ALL THINGS INTO HIS HAND" *S. John* iii. 35.

The relevance of this is obvious, "*all* that the "Father hath given me," says CHRIST, "shall "come unto me," ch. vi. 37. It is one of the large group of passages showing the universality of CHRIST'S kingdom; compare ch. xiii. 3, and see the connection of the gift of all things to CHRIST and HIS atoning death—very significant I think, and perhaps overlooked by many. Also see *S. Matt.* vi. 27, where, just before the well-known appeal "come unto me," JESUS has been saying that *all things* were delivered unto HIM by HIS Father; a connection surely suggestive. Read, too, in this light, *S. Matt.* xxviii. 18, and note the connection between all power claimed by CHRIST, and HIS claim to bring all nations to discipleship. So too *Heb.* ii. 8-9, in this last passage again the connection between the gift of all things to JESUS CHRIST, and HIS atone-

ment is very marked—HIS tasting death for *every* man. The Divine Son is set over all things; as HE creates *all* things (actually) so HE redeems and restores *all* things (actually, not potentially); HIS relation is to all, not a part. GOD has given to HIM all things; and all things given to HIM shall come to HIM.

"THE CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD. *S. John* iv. 42.

The same truth—the *world* saved. In saying GOD is the creator of the world, an actual creation is meant; so in saying CHRIST is the Saviour of the world, not anything less than an actual salvation is meant; a point I must be forgiven for pressing, so true is it and so generally forgotten.

"GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN, THAT NOTHING BE LOST." *S. John* vi. 12.

In passing we may note this passage, for CHRIST'S *hints* go very far, and are full of meaning. What is the larger hope but this, that of all that the Father hath given HIM HE will lose nothing, but will gather up every fragment?

"HE WHICH * GIVETH LIFE UNTO THE WORLD." *S. John* vi. 33

Here we are told that life is given, not offered merely to the world. The world *(Kosmos)* is in Scripture the ungodly mass, the outer circle. It is contrasted with the inner circle of the faithful, the elect. But this world is over and over again

claimed by CHRIST. HE saves it; HE gives life to it; HE gives light to it. Remember to "offer" is not the same as to "give."

"ALL THAT THE FATHER GIVETH ME SHALL COME TO ME * AND THIS IS THE FATHER'S WILL THAT OF ALL WHICH HE HATH GIVEN ME I SHOULD LOSE NOTHING." *S. John* vi. 37-9.

This is very explicit; we have seen that GOD the Father has given to CHRIST, not some things, but *all* things; and here we have the word and promise of JESUS CHRIST that *all* that has been given to HIM shall come to HIM, and that nothing shall be lost (ch. vi. 12). What further is needed to prove from Scripture a universal salvation? What more could GOD possibly say?

"MY FLESH WHICH I WILL GIVE FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD." *S. John* vi. 51.

Again, it is the *world* for whose life CHRIST is to give HIS flesh. Can HE give in vain? HIS gifts are "without repentance," *i.e.*, must be effectual. To say that HIS word can return to HIM having failed, or His gifts not take effect, is to contradict Holy Scripture.

"THEN SPAKE JESUS * I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD." *S. John* viii. 12.

Here too the *world*, the ungodly world, is that of which CHRIST is the Light as well as the Life.

"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD."—*S. John* ix. 5.

The same idea over and over again; not the elect merely, but the *world*, enlightened; quickened; saved.

"AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME." *S. John* xii. 32.

I think the plainest comment the best here. A partial drawing, *i.e.*, a partial salvation makes HIS words *untrue*. One reads the comments of good men on this passage, with a feeling akin to despair, as they attempt to make JESUS CHRIST say that which HE did not say, and not say that which HE did say. What HE does say is exactly given in the following lines :—

> So shall I lift up in my pierced hands * *
> Beyond the reach of grief and guilt * *
> *The whole creation.—E. B. Browning.*

"FOR I CAME NOT TO JUDGE THE WORLD, BUT TO SAVE THE WORLD." *S. John* xii. 47.

This is as distinct as possible; its force can only be evaded by asserting that CHRIST will fail to accomplish that very thing which HE came to do: and this assertion must be made in the teeth of those repeated and explicit passages which declare the completeness of HIS triumph.

"AND HE IS THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS: AND NOT FOR OURS ONLY, BUT ALSO FOR THE SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD." 1 *John* ii. 2.

Notice here the world contrasted with the true disciples; and yet the propitiation is not to be

confined to the few, it is for all. S. JOHN's anxiety is to *assert this for all.* Here, as so often, the narrower and wider purposes of salvation are both mentioned: the narrower not excluding, as in the popular view, but *including* and *implying* the wider; a truth of the deepest importance.

"THE SON OF GOD WAS MANIFESTED THAT HE MIGHT DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL."—1 *John* iii. 8.

Who can read with impartial mind this explicit statement, and doubt its meaning? The very purpose of the manifestation of GOD's Son is the sweeping away of Satan's works. How then can this *possibly be true*, while pain and sin and Hell endure for ever and ever? No ideas can be more exactly opposed than the permanence of evil, and yet the destruction of the works of the Devil. Is sin the Devil's work? Is all that sin involves the work of the Devil? Yes, or No? You cannot answer in the negative. But if the affirmative be true, then all is to be swept away; Hell and sin and sorrow.

"THE FATHER SENT THE SON TO BE THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD." 1 *John* iv. 14.

Does it not savour of mockery to say that the Father sent the Son to destroy evil and to save the world, and yet that neither shall evil be destroyed or the world saved! And remember, I am only pleading for CHRIST's doing the very thing HE has come to do, and promised to do.

"I HAVE THE KEYS OF HELL AND DEATH."
Rev. i. 18.

Significant surely! Doubly significant when we remember that CHRIST had just *used these keys to open the prison doors.*—see p. 80-1, and note on 1 *Peter* iii. 19. How, if so, can death (the second or any death) sever from JESUS CHRIST *(who holds the keys)*, from HIS power to save?

"AND EVERY CREATURE WHICH IS IN HEAVEN, AND ON THE EARTH, AND UNDER THE EARTH, AND SUCH AS ARE IN THE SEA, AND ALL THAT ARE IN THEM, HEARD I SAYING UNTO HIM THAT SITTITH ON THE THRONE, AND UNTO THE LAMB, BLESSINGS, ETC." *Rev.* v. 13.

How comprehensive this picture! Its words embrace every created thing—on the earth, and under the earth, and in the sea. All are represented as swelling the chorus of praise to GOD, and to the Lamb. Yes, to such an end we trust and hope that all creation is indeed coming, because we trust in the living GOD, who is the Saviour of all men; and because we believe HIS own words, that promise that all things shall be made new. How else could *all things* join in this glorious chorus?

"DEATH AND HELL WERE CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE." *Rev.* xx. 14.

"The sense of the whole seems to be that at "the final consummation of all things, all evil, "physical and moral, will be abolished".—Bishop WARBURTON.

"BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW."
Revelations xxi. 5.

This is the same glorious hope, not for some, but for *all;* no less than *all things* are to be made new. Here again we have a universal restoration distinctly promised—the salvation of all.

"AND THE LEAVES OF THE TREE WERE FOR THE HEALING OF THE NATIONS. AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE CURSE." *Revelations* xxii. 2-3.

Here is a striking hint—after the manner of Holy Scripture—as to a future work of restoration; a hint that the nations are one day to be healed; that in another age there shall be ministries of salvation; for all this is subsequent to the passing away of the present earth, and the present Heaven (ch. xxi. 1). And as a result of this healing, there shall be no more curse—no pain—no tears—and no endless Hell therefore, but *all things* made new.

"I WILL POUR OUT OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH."
Acts ii. 17.

This, and *no less*, is over and over again declared to be the scope and extent of CHRIST'S Redemption. Compare these words too with the passages following, in one and all of which S. PETER emphatically states the *universality* of CHRIST'S work of salvation; it is to turn "every "one of them from his iniquities;" nay, it is to culminate in a time of renewal of all things, as our next citation shall shew.

"THE TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS."
Acts iii. 21.

All things are to be restored; and this is said to be the meaning of the work of CHRIST, the meaning of the promise to ABRAHAM, of the Jewish covenant (v. 25, and c. ii. 17), the meaning of the outpoured spirit. This GOD hath spoken by all "the Prophets since the world began." I repeat, either these words of the Apostle are untrue, or there shall one day be a universal restoration—*all* things made new—*all* men saved.

"AND HAVE HOPE THAT THERE SHALL BE A RESURRECTION * BOTH OF THE JUST AND THE UNJUST."
Acts xxiv. 15.

Note these words—could S. PAUL have hoped for a resurrection of the *unjust* if that meant hopeless punishment to them? "Who is *so great* "*a fool* asks a famous Father, as to think so great "a boon as the resurrection can be to those "that rise an occasion of endless torment?" An interesting subject opens out here. So the fact of resurrection in S. GREGORY's (of Nyssa) view *involves restoration* necessarily because it involves incorruption and glory, things proper to the Divine nature. Resurrection is, he says, "restoration of our nature to its unfallen state."—*De an. et. resur.* And to the same effect (as I understand his words) writes THEODORET in *Rom.* v. 15-7., vii. 20-3, 2 *Cor.* ii. 14-6.

CHAPTER VII.

"*WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES.*"

"With me, this final victory (of good over evil), is not a matter "of speculation at all, but of absolute faith; and to disbelieve it "would be for me *to cease altogether to trust or to worship God.*"—Bishop EWING.

In the last chapter we saw how very numerous are the passages which the writings of *S. Matthew*, *S. Luke* and *S. John* contain, clearly asserting the salvation of all men, or implying it by necessary inference. We now, in the present chapter, proceed to consider the many and weighty declarations, to the same effect, furnished by the epistles of *S. Paul*, *S. Peter*, and that to the *Hebrews*. I may here say, that we shall find in these books the stream of promise still widening —the blessed purpose of Redemption as universal in its effects—indicated with a precision of language, and a variety of illustration, convincing to any fair mind.

"THE PROMISE THAT HE SHOULD BE THE HEIR OF THE WORLD * TO ABRAHAM."

Here remark how distinct is the assertion—that in the promise to ABRAHAM is implied a universal blessing. The election by GOD of the Jews really involves *the world's* salvation; for ABRAHAM is "heir of the world," *i.e.*, receives as his inheritance, the *whole* world. In a later chapter (ch. ix.) I have pursued at more length this all important fact, that the essential idea involved in the divine election, is by it to convey a blessing to *all;* not to offer, but actually to impart this blessing.

"IF THROUGH THE OFFENCE OF ONE MANY BE DEAD, MUCH MORE THE GRACE OF GOD, * WHICH IS BY ONE MAN JESUS CHRIST, HATH ABOUNDED UNTO MANY. . THEREFORE AS BY THE OFFENCE OF ONE, JUDGEMENT CAME UPON ALL MEN TO CONDEMNATION; EVEN SO BY THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ONE THE FREE GIFT CAME UPON ALL MEN UNTO JUSTIFICATION OF LIFE." *Romans* v. 15-8.

I cannot but earnestly commend a study of these verses, and with them, of the whole drift and argument of the passage. It is, I do not fear to assert, *absolutely irreconcilable* with a partial salvation. It contains a statement as explicit as words can convey it, of this great truth—GOD's remedy is stronger than sin. Wherever, upon whomsoever sin has lighted, there shall GOD's grace, through JESUS CHRIST, come to heal. In the very same sense as "the many" (all men)

were made sinners, so the "many" shall have righteousness—not merely offered them—but be made righteous. Less than this cannot satisfy the original text, about the meaning of which there is no question at all. Will the advocates of the popular creed explain how the grace of GOD (v. 15) can be *mightier*, in fact, than the Fall, if there be a Hell ringing to all eternity with the groans of the lost? Will they explain how grace can *much more* abound than the offence—if there be a place of endless torture to punish the offence—if the offence be never taken away?

> "FOR THE EARNEST EXPECTATION OF THE CREATURE WAITETH FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD. BECAUSE THE CREATURE ITSELF ALSO SHALL BE DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD. FOR WE KNOW THAT THE WHOLE CREATION GROANETH AND TRAVAILETH IN PAIN TOGETHER UNTIL NOW. * WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, TO WIT, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY." *Romans* viii. 19-21-22-23.

Here is a glorious passage in which the larger hope is not dimly, but explicitly taught—taught with absolute clearness. As to the details of S. PAUL'S meaning, men may fairly differ; but his central thought is clear. All created things have been subjected to vanity—to pain and suffering. Yet these are but the travail pains of a new birth; all that suffers shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Note how here (alone in the New Testament I think) are

the sufferings of the whole creation alluded to, and how emphatic is the assertion that *every created thing**—*pasa he ktisis*—is awaiting Redemption; and this reaches them by the manifestation of the Sons of GOD, 'the first fruits.'

"FOR IF THE CASTING AWAY OF THEM BE THE RECONCILING OF THE WORLD, WHAT SHALL THE RECEIVING OF THEM BE, BUT LIFE FROM THE DEAD? FOR IF THE FIRST FRUIT BE HOLY, THE LUMP IS ALSO HOLY." *Romans* xi. 15-16.

Here are neglected truths plainly stated. The calling of the Jews is linked in GOD'S plan with the world's salvation (v. 12). They are HIS people, in the truly divine sense, that by them the world's salvation may be worked out. They, as 'first fruits,' represent and pledge the world—this is the true election and this only—and JESUS CHRIST has, by HIS Cross, made of Jew and Gentile "one new man"—suggestive words (*Eph.* ii. 15). ABRAHAM is thus made, in Scripture phrase, the "heir of the world." But it is precisely this breadth of the divine purpose that the Bible is so anxious to enforce, and the popular creed so anxious to deny.

"AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED."—*Rom.* xi. 26.

Not one soul therefore lost finally; not a Dives—not a Judas—if *all* shall be saved. And

* "Thus, then," says S. JEROME, "*the whole number of created beings (universa creatura)* unites its groans with ours that it may be set free from the bondage of vanity."—In *Eph.* ii. 14.

Israel is but a type of all mankind. Israel is the election—but GOD's election means, that in Israel "all the families of the earth shall be "blessed." *(a)*. GOD's rejection of Israel is apparent only, for HIS calling is indefeasible, and therefore (*b*) *all* Israel shall be saved—without exception. *(c)*. Israel, *i.e.*, the elect, is so closely linked with the world, that their very rejection means the world's salvation—in GOD's mysterious plan. (*d*). So close is this tie between the elect and the world, that a further promise follows, that Israel's restoration shall be to the world "life *from the dead*"—v. 15—in itself a very suggestive phrase as to GOD's way of giving life—see ch. ix., on Death.

"FOR THE GIFTS AND CALLING OF GOD ARE WITHOUT REPENTANCE." *Romans* xi. 29.

That is, what GOD gives, HE gives effectually. When HE calls, men *must hear*—a fact of the deepest significance, nay, decisive of this question. Let me ask the advocates of the popular creed, how, if GOD's call to mankind *must be obeyed*, sooner or later, there is any room for endless disobedience in Hell?

"GOD HATH CONCLUDED THEM ALL IN UNBELIEF, THAT HE MIGHT HAVE MERCY UPON ALL." *Romans* xi. 32.

Words that surely need no comment. The original is the widest possible; it is the whole

mass of men to whom S. PAUL refers. *The whole* is shut up unto unbelief in order that *the whole* may find mercy.

"AS I LIVE, SAITH THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL CONFESS TO GOD. SO THEN EVERY ONE OF US SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF TO GOD."—*Rom.* xiv. 11-12.

S. PAUL here quotes the great passage of *Isaiah* (see p. 127), in which *salvation* is promised to the entire human race. From the whole context it is clear that CHRIST'S empire over *all* is absolute; extends to the dead; implies salvation; and this salvation is linked with his (future) judgement.—See on judgement, ch. ix.

"AS IN ADAM ALL DIE, EVEN SO IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE. 1 *Cor.* xv. 22.

AS ADAM actually brought death, spiritually, to all, so the second ADAM actually brings life, spiritually, to all. No offer of life can for a moment satisfy the plain language of the text. Nothing less than life really—spiritually imparted to all by the second ADAM--can fairly express S. PAUL'S meaning. In plain words. S. PAUL is here distinctly teaching the salvation of all men.

"FOR HE MUST REIGN, TILL HE HATH PUT ALL ENEMIES UNDER HIS FEET. * * THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL." 1 *Cor.* xv. 25-28.

There is here, *at the End*, no place for sin—no trace of evil—no Hell—for is not GOD *All and in*

All? S. PAUL'S meaning, says the famous S. GREGORY, of Nyssa, is, "that the nature of evil shall "be wholly exterminated, and divine goodness "embrace within itself *every rational creature* "* * everything must be subject to HIM who "rules over all. Now, subjection to GOD is per- "fect and absolute alienation from evil." S. PAUL, in fact, defines here this subjection of all things to CHRIST as being perfect harmony with HIS will, for it is the same subjection by which CHRIST is subject to the FATHER.—see, too, note on *Phil.* iii. 10. "In this text" says S. GREGORY, in another place, "the Scripture seems to declare "the perfect and absolute destruction of sin and "evil."—*De an. et. resur.*

"O DEATH WHERE IS THY STING? O GRAVE WHERE IS THY VICTORY?" 1 *Cor.* xv. 55.

Fitly do these words close this chapter, with a prospect of *universal* victory over every opposing power. I ask my readers quietly to think over the whole drift of this chapter; to mark the Apostle's increasing rapture, as his argument expands, and as the prospect opens before him of a universe yet to be, from which every form of evil is banished. Let them consider these two thoughts, ever present to the Apostle's mind here: the *oneness* of mankind in CHRIST, and the *certainty* and *universality* of CHRIST'S victory; let them, with S. PAUL, look on in thought to the End, when GOD shall be All in All; then let

them say if the salvation of all men be not taught in Holy Scripture.

"GOD WAS IN CHRIST RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF." 2 *Cor.* v. 19.

Here is once more stated the extent of CHRIST'S work, it is the world reconciled, and no less than the world. The question is, by what right do we limit its efficacy, when GOD assures us that HIS gifts and calling are without repentance, and HIS purpose immutable? Is GOD in earnest? does HE *mean what He says?* I speak with reverence. This is a question that must surely often rise unbidden, as we read these statements of the Bible, and compare them with the popular creed, which so often turns "all" into "some," when salvation is promised to "all," and turns the "world," when that is said to be saved, into a mere fraction of men.

"IN THEE SHALL ALL NATIONS BE BLESSED." *Gal.* iii. 8.

The force of texts like this lies in the fact, that they shew the true meaning of GOD'S election, and that they are links in that great chain of promise—of blessing to *all* men—which S. PETER assures us GOD spake by the mouth of all HIS Holy Prophets, and which he declares to mean the restitution of all things.

"THAT * HE MIGHT GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, BOTH WHICH ARE IN HEAVEN AND WHICH ARE ON EARTH." *Eph.* i. 10.

Could the writer of these words have possibly believed in a Hell swallowing up its myriads of victims? What can convey the idea of a future, in which all things—all the universe—shall be brought to CHRIST, if this passage does not convey it? But if the universe and its contents, are summed up in CHRIST, where is any possibility of an endless Hell?

"GOD HATH PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET." *Eph.* i. 22.

Yes, to JESUS CHRIST *all* are to be brought—all things are to bend to HIM. Now can you—forgive my repeating the question—find place for Hell torments in a universe in which *everything* is to be summed up in JESUS CHRIST; in which every knee is to bend to HIM, and to HIM *every* tongue to confess?

"THE CHURCH WHICH IS HIS BODY, THE FULNESS OF HIM WHICH FILLETH ALL IN ALL" *Eph.* i. 23.

"The Church," says S. JEROME, "may be "understood as that composed not only of human "beings, but of angels, and of the whole body of "rational creatures,"—suggestive words.

"THAT IN THE AGES TO COME HE MIGHT SHEW THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF HIS GRACE."—*Eph.* ii. 7.

On this S. JEROME says—"The extent of this "grace is shewn by the fact that in the ages to "come that grace will be extended to the whole

"number of rational creatures," including evil spirits, as he goes on to state expressly.—See his words quoted in ch. iv.

"WHAT IS THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE MYSTERY, &c." *Eph.* iii. 9-10.

"The mystery of HIS will," says AMBROSIASTER, (probably HILARY the Deacon—4th cent.), "is "that HE should shew mercy to *all* who had "strayed, whether fallen angels or men."

"HE ASCENDED UP FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS." *Eph.* iv. 10.

But if CHRIST is to fill all things—the universe—how can evil subsist eternally?

"FROM WHOM THE WHOLE BODY FITLY JOINED TOGETHER * MAKETH INCREASE." *Eph.* iv. 16.

Very striking is S. JEROME's comment here. "The whole number of rational beings," he says, "may be compared to a single body, now torn "asunder by sin, but in the restoration of all "things, CHRIST, like some wonder-working "physician, shall come and restore to its proper "place every part—the fallen angels to their "former station, and man to Paradise once more."

"WHO IS THE FIRST-BORN OF EVERY CREATURE: AND BY HIM TO RECONCILE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF; BY HIM, I SAY, WHETHER THEY BE THINGS † IN EARTH, OR THINGS IN HEAVEN." *Col.* i. 15-19-20.

I ask you carefully to read and consider this

† Observe here as elsewhere, S. PAUL seems to provide against a possible or a probable doubt as to the extent of this reconciliation by repeating his assertion and emphasising it.

passage, and say, if it does not contain a clear statement that CHRIST is the "first-born" of all creation, and thus sums up in HIMSELF all, not the elect or holy, but mankind (see pages 69-71) whose *solidarity is thus affirmed*? I ask you further, in all calmness, to weigh the words in which S. PAUL traces this prerogative of JESUS CHRIST through creation up to redemption; to take in their simple grandeur the words, which tell how HE on and by the Cross reconciled all things unto HIMSELF, whether on earth or in Heaven. I ask you finally what these words can mean if they do not mean a *certain* restitution of *all* things?

> "THAT AT THE NAME OF JESUS EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, OF THINGS IN HEAVEN, AND THINGS IN EARTH, AND THINGS UNDER THE EARTH; AND THAT EVERY TONGUE SHOULD CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER." *Phip.* ii. 10-11.

This is S. PAUL'S statement of the great vision of the *Apocalypse* (*Rev.* v. 13), in which every created thing in Heaven and on earth and under the earth unites to sing—blessing, etc., to GOD most high. Could a picture more universal be painted—*every* knee, in heaven, on earth, under the earth? "So it is," says S. JEROME, referring to this passage, "that the Cross of the Lord "has helped not man alone, but angels, and that "*every created being has been cleansed by the* "*blood of its Lord.*"—In *Eph.* ii. 14.

"ABLE EVEN TO SUBDUE ALL THINGS UNTO HIMSELF."
Phil. iii. 21,

In what sense this subjugation of all things to CHRIST is to be understood, is clear from the context, "who shall fashion anew the body of "our humiliation, that it may be conformed to "the body of HIS glory, according to the working "whereby HE is able even to subdue all things "unto HIMSELF." Note the significance of this. No one can doubt that CHRIST is destined to subdue all things, but this passage shews *decisively* that CHRIST'S subduing all things (in the Scriptural sense) is *making them like unto Himself.* —See note on 1 *Cor.* xv. 25. "In saying that "every knee, &c., &c., shall bend to JESUS, the "Apostle clearly teaches the harmony of the "entire universe with what is good."—S. GREGORY, *De an. et. res.*

"GOD OUR SAVIOUR, WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, FOR THERE IS ONE GOD." 1 *Tim.* ii. 3-4.

"None can hinder His doing as HE wills * * "Now HIS will is that *all* should be saved. "* * But because none is saved against his "own will GOD wills us to have a good will that "so HIS counsel may take effect."—In *Eph.* i. 2. In these few words S. JEROME states concisely the whole case for the universalists. Further, S. PAUL rests on the essential unity of GOD—the One GOD—can have but one eternal irresistible purpose. "GOD is One, the One that is All,

"that binds up all in one, and one in all, and "makes all one."—J. WHITE, *Restoration of all things.*

"GOD THE SAVIOUR OF ALL MEN, SPECIALLY OF THOSE THAT BELIEVE." 1 *Tim.* iv. 10.

Any possible obscurity in this passage becomes clear the moment we reflect on GOD's plan by which the elect—those who believe—are first saved, and then become the means, here or in the ages yet to come, of saving all men; as will be more fully explained in a subsequent chapter (ch. ix.). Note, the clear statement that GOD is (actually) the Saviour of all men. In saying GOD is the Creator of all men, no one doubts that a universal creation is meant; so in saying GOD is the Saviour of all men, a universal salvation is assuredly meant.

"OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, WHO HATH ABOLISHED DEATH." 2 *Tim.* i. 10.

Death is *abolished*, and with death that which it in Scripture implies, sin and evil. For death abolished and Hell maintained for ever are plain contradictions. Here we may very well ask those who maintain the doctrine of conditional immortality, how death can be abolished and yet swallow up finally all sinners in a sentence of annihilation—as they teach—(a plain absurdity).

"FOR THE GRACE OF GOD HATH APPEARED BRINGING SALVATION TO ALL MEN." *Titus* ii. 11.

Yes, to all men, salvation: this is precisely the larger hope. But how is "salvation brought "to all men" consistent with the damnation of myriads of men—nay, of any man?

"HE ALSO WENT AND PREACHED UNTO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON." 1 *Peter* iii. 19.

If we believe these words of the Apostle, they amount to a complete overthrow of the popular view of the state of the sinful dead; for plainly these words do shew a process of redemption as *going on after death*, which the popular creed flatly denies. Remark, too, who they were to whom CHRIST preached: they were not those who previously had no chance of salvation, but they seem to have been those who had sinned against the greatest light known in their day:—they were those who had been disobedient in the days of NOAH. Yet it was to these men that JESUS went with HIS offer of salvation, *after their earthly probation was over, after they had been shut up 'in prison.'*

"THE GOSPEL WAS PREACHED EVEN TO THE DEAD, THAT THEY MIGHT BE JUDGED * BUT LIVE IN THE SPIRIT." 1 *Peter* iv. 6.

Words, these, surely full of hope! Notice again here the connection between judgement and salvation (see v. 5.). S. PETER in this

reference to the preaching of the gospel to the *dead*, must have—as just remarked—intended a lesson to the Christians of his day, and of our day; must have meant a hint as to what GOD'S plan of mercy in the full extent is, else the reference could hardly have been made. Here we see sinners *dead* and *judged* and yet, in very deed, *evangelised—saved—alive* to GOD in the spirit.

"THE LORD IS * NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH, BUT THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE." 2 *Peter* iii. 9.

If then any do perish, GOD'S will and design must have been successfully resisted; a thing absurd, for both are immutable.

"THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET, ETC." *Heb.* ii. 8-9

This is to be compared with that very large class of passages which speak so clearly of CHRIST'S kingdom as destined to extend over all things, *e.g. Eph.* iv. 10; i. 10; *Phil.* iii. 9-11 ; *Rev.* v. 13. I have already clearly shewn that subjection to CHRIST means perfect harmony and peace.—See note on *Phil.* iii. 21.

"THAT THROUGH DEATH HE MIGHT DESTROY THE DEVIL." *Heb.* ii. 14.

But the destruction of the Devil is inconsistent with the continuance of death and evil (if words are to have any meaning at all.)

"THE IMMUTABILITY OF HIS COUNSEL." *Heb.* vi. 17.

Yes, on this we build! Would you know what HIS counsel is? Turn to 2 *Peter* iii. 9: "Not "willing that any should perish, but (willing) "that all should come to salvation." The word translated 'willing,' is the same as the 'counsel' of this passage. And thus, as HIS counsel is immutable—a partial salvation becomes impossible.

"FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL * ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST."
Heb. viii. 10-11.

This is spoken of the New Covenant, and is a distinct statement of its true extent. *All from the least to the greatest*, are to know GOD. Now, can a partial salvation really be said to satisfy these plain words, on any principle of common *honesty* of interpretation, of common *truthfulness*?

"HE HATH APPEARED TO PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF." *Heb.* ix. 26.

See how very significant the words are, it is the *destruction* of sin, its annihilation, that is said to be the object of the manifestation of JESUS CHRIST. But this annihilation of sin and evil cannot by any fairness of interpretation take place, if Hell and its horrors go on for ever. Sin *put away*—all sin abolished—is the promise of the text, and the hope of the universalist.

"JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY TO-DAY AND UNTO THE AGES." *Heb.* xiii. 8.

The same throughout 'the ages;' words little heeded, I fear; and yet which contain indeed the very essence of the Gospel—the very sum and substance of the true hope for our race. I rejoice to close with such a passage this long list of texts from Holy Scripture, which one and all testify to the assured hope there is in JESUS CHRIST of the salvation of every child of ADAM. For what is it these words teach? not that CHRIST is now a Saviour, and will in future be merely a judge to condemn; but that what HE was on earth that is HE now; and that HE will be through 'the ages' (judging ever, but only a judge that HE may by it be a Saviour). "These "words imply that through the ages a Saviour is "needed, and will be found as much as to-day "and yesterday."

Indeed, I might almost say, that this passage holds the key to the whole mystery of future punishment, and future salvation. It bids us look beyond the present life, to a series of ages yet to come, and there see JESUS CHRIST still working to save; doubtless by penalty, by sharp discipline, by fiery trial in the case of hardened sinners, but still through 'the ages' the same JESUS, *i.e.*, Saviour, and destined to continue HIS work of salvation till the last wanderer shall have been found.

And here let me say that this series of passages

of Holy Scripture, lengthened as it is, might very easily have been increased. So far from producing every possible passage that teaches the larger hope, I might have easily cited other texts that teach, or imply the same. In proof of this, let me take but two clauses of the Lord's Prayer; "Our Father," these two words really involve the whole question—they convey all I teach—are the charter of our humanity—they form a tie never to be broken between man and GOD, "Thy "will be done on earth as in Heaven." But how is HIS will done in Heaven? It is *universally* done. Shall it not then be *universally* done on earth too? Does JESUS CHRIST put into our mouths a petition which HE does not design to fulfil, nay, to fulfil in larger measure than we can hope? Would you have further proof how true it is that I have not exhausted all the passages of the New Testament that teach the larger hope?—although I prefer to appeal on this point (see p. 4) to the Divine justice—I have but to quote the memorable words, which may fitly wind up the series, "GOD is love." To this point all HIS attributes converge. Love is the name of that character, which united they form (love eternal, infinite, divine). Can this love, by any possibility, consign to hopeless, endless, agony, its own children? Could this love, by any possibility, have called into being any one creature knowing that unending torture would be its fate? Can infinite love ever cease to love

—can love essential ever fail?—let the Apostle reply, "Love *never faileth.*" *

A few words of earnest caution must be added here. I trust it has been made plain in these pages, that in teaching universal salvation, I have not for a moment advocated the salvation of sinners while they continue such. Far other is the view maintained here; it is the certain punishment of sin I teach—GOD's judgement upon all sin (a judgement awful it may well be in its duration and its nature for the hardened offender), but in all cases directed by love and justice to the final extirpation of sin. Nay, I have opposed the popular creed on this very ground (pp. 4 and 44) that it in fact teaches men to make light of sin, and that in two ways: first, because it sets forth a scheme of retribution so unjust as to make men believe its penalties will never be inflicted; and next because it in fact asserts that GOD either will not or cannot overcome and destroy evil and sin, but will bear with them to all eternity; will permit them to continue

* In the above brief notes I have not attempted an exhaustive comment. It has been my aim to point out the plain natural meaning of the passages cited, in their bearing on the future destiny of man, and to present this meaning in the most simple and straightforward way. Specially have I urged the imperative necessity of truthfulness, of assuming that what the sacred writers say, that they mean, in the ordinary acceptation of their words—that in saying, *e.g.*, 'I 'make all things new,' CHRIST really meant all things and not some things; that in saying 'GOD is the Saviour of all men,' the Apostle meant that GOD really does save all men.

defiling and darkening his universe for ever and ever. Let me then say with all due emphasis, that not one word has been written in these pages tending to represent GOD as a merely good natured Being—all-indulgent to the sinner—who regards as a light matter the violation of HIS holy law. Such shallow theology, GOD forbid that I should teach. It is, I fully admit, in the light of Calvary that we are bound to see the true guilt of sin. But let us beware, lest, as we stand in thought at the foot of the Cross, we dishonour the Atonement by limiting its power to save—by teaching men that it does *in fact* fail to save countless myriads—that CHRIST is after all not the victor but the vanquished! Nay, let us beware lest while in words professing to honour CHRIST, we, in fact, make *Him a liar;* for HE has never said, 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw some 'men,' or even 'most men,' but 'I will draw *all* 'men unto me.'

CHAPTER VIII.

"*WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES.*"

"The word Hell, the sacred writers *never* use in the sense which "is generally given to it."—Dr. ERNEST PETAVEL.—*The struggle for Eternal Life.*

In the preceding chapters we have examined the various passages of the New Testament which teach, or imply clearly, the larger hope for all men. In the present chapter I purpose considering the chief texts alleged in favour of the received doctrine; and I hope to shew, that while undoubtedly the penalties threatened against sinners are sharp and terrible, still they are not *endless.* I believe that *no one passage* can be found any where in the Bible that so teaches, when fairly translated and understood. I must ask you, before we proceed to our examination of these passages, to bear in mind the following considerations:—

1. A fact of the *deepest significance* is this: that although many terms and phrases existed,

by which the idea of unendingness might have been conveyed, yet none of these is applied by our LORD and HIS Apostles to the future punishment of the impenitent.

2. Thus *aiidios* or *ateleutetos*, a stronger word, are never used of future punishment in the New Testament. Nor is it anywhere said to be *aneu telous* "without end" nor do we read that it shall go on *pantote*, or *eis to dienekes* "for ever."

3. Is it, I ask, conceivable, that a sentence, so awful as to be absolutely beyond all human thought, should be pronounced against myriads upon myriads of hapless creatures in language *admittedly* capable of a very different meaning and *habitually so used in the New Testament*?

4. Again, while the texts already quoted in favour of the salvation of all men, use language clear and explicit, and are a fair rendering of the original in all cases, it is not so in the case of the passages usually alleged to prove endless torment. In all cases where they seem to the English reader so to teach, they are either mistranslated or misinterpreted, or both.

5. As instances of wholly incorrect rendering in our version, let me take the words 'Hell' and 'damnation,' * (the terms 'everlasting,' 'eternal,'

* I may again remind my readers how inaccurate is the assumption all but universally made, that these terms *are in the Bible.* They are merely in a certain human and fallible translation of the Bible, a totally different thing.

and 'for ever and ever,' also complete mistranslations, will be in the next chapter, fully discussed). 'Hell' is, really, in the New Testament, the rendering of three widely differing Greek words, viz., "Gehenna," "Hades," and "Tartarus," a fact in itself a sufficient comment on the *accuracy* of our translation. "*Gehenna*" occurs eleven times in the New Testament as used by our LORD, and once by S. JAMES. In the original Greek it is taken almost unchanged from the Hebrew (*Ge-hinnom*, *i.e.*, valley of Hinnom), an example which our translators surely ought to have followed, and rendered *Gehenna*, as it is, by *Gehenna*. This valley lay outside Jerusalem: once a pleasant vale and later a scene of Moloch worship, it had sunk into a common cesspit at last. Into it were flung offal, the carcasses of animals, and it would seem, of criminals, and in it were kept fires ever burning (for *purification* be it remembered), while the worms were for ever preying on the decaying matter. The so-called undying worm and flame, of which so much has been made (i.) were purely temporal and finite (ii.), preyed only on the dead body (iii.) and were one and all purifactory: three particulars essential to the due understanding of the passages on which the dogma of endless torments has been so unfairly based. *Hades* is a classical term, denoting merely the state or place of disembodied spirits after death. Our Revisers have, by a tardy justice, struck Hell

as its translation, out of their version. It occurs in the Gospels and Epistles five times, twice in the Acts, and four times in the Revelations. Its true meaning is hardly now a subject of dispute by any one: it denotes that intermediate state or place, which succeeds death; a state which in our recoil from Romish error, we have almost ceased to recognise at all. *Tartarus* occurs once only (in the verbal form) in the New Testament, in 2 *Peter* ii. 4. It also is a classical term, used there most often, although not always, for the place of future punishment of the wicked. Here S. PETER applies it not to human beings, but to the lost angels; and in their case it denotes *no final place of torment*, but a prison in which they are kept *awaiting* their final judgement, hence to render it by the term Hell is simply preposterous. 'Damnation,' 'damned,' both of these terms represent merely two Greek words (and their derivatives), *krino* and *katakrino*, *i.e.*, to judge and to condemn. Our Revisers have felt how unwarrantable the former translation was, for which there is indeed this excuse, that probably, when the authorised version was made, the meaning of the word 'damn' was far milder than it has since become (as was certainly the case with the term 'Hell'). To import into these words the idea of endless torment is to err against all fairness and all reason; for they simply mean to 'judge,' and at most, to 'con-

'demn.' Of endless condemnation there is no thought in the original, in any case where these words occur. *

Most significant is it that when we look to the original of the New Testament, the whole idea of endless punishment, that we associate with these words, 'Hell,' and 'damnation,' wholly disappears. The horrors of unending agony, which these terms conjure up for so many, vanish when we come to know that by 'damnation' is simply meant 'judgement,' or at most 'condem-'nation,' as our Revisers now very fully admit in their version of the New Testament; and by 'Hell' is only meant, either the place of disembodied souls—*Hades*—(as our Revisers now render it)—or the Jewish *Gehenna* (see margin of Revised Version), a place of temporary punishment, where the worms fed continually, it is true, and the fire for ever burned; but in both cases purifying, and causing no pain (for the bodies were those of the dead); and where both 'undying' worm, and 'unquenchable' fire, have long since, in their literal sense, passed away. True it is, most true, that while no unending torment is threatened by our LORD, yet HIS words do convey most weighty and most solemn warning

* In one passage, 2 *Peter* ii. 3, the word 'damnation' represents a different Greek word, '*apoleia*,' and is rightly rendered by our Revisers as 'destruction,' in that place.

to the sinner—warning that I am persuaded gains in real weight and solemnity when its true import is discerned—because the conscience recognises its justice. Lastly, let me repeat that I accept heartily and emphatically —in their true natural sense—every warning, however terrible, and every penalty threatened against sinners in GOD'S word; but that true natural sense is not, as I hope to shew, in any one case that of endless torment. My quarrel with the advocates of the popular view (as far as the Scripture is concerned) is that, while assigning to one class of texts a meaning, which they cannot fairly bear, they at the same time wholly put out of view—blot out from the Bible in fact —a very large and weighty class of passages, furnished by the New Testament, in favour of universal salvation. Thus, as so often happens when men persist in seeing only one side, they fail to apprehend the true meaning, even of that one side, which they present to us as though it were the whole.

"HE SHALL BURN UP THE CHAFF WITH UNQUENCHABLE FIRE." *S. Matthew* iii. 12, *Luke* iii., 17.

(a) The word 'unquenchable' is no doubt an unfair rendering of the original—which certainly does not convey the idea of a fire that never can be quenched—but of a fire which cannot be checked or quenched in doing its work. In HOMER, where this word first occurs, it is "applied

"to the fire which for a few hours rages in the "Grecian fleet—to the gleam of HECTOR's helmet "—to glory—to laughter and to shouting." In the same popular way, *without a thought of endless duration*, it is found in ecclesiastical writers. JOSEPHUS calls the fire on the temple altar 'always unquenchable' at a time when both temple and altar were destroyed. "EUSEBIUS says of two martyrs, that they were "consumed with 'unquenchable' fire; and again "of other two, that they were destroyed by 'un- "quenchable' fire."—*Mercy and Judgement*, p. 406. (b) If the context be examined, it becomes clear that the reference is to a *present*, and then impending judgement—a present work of CHRIST, and not a future punishment. (c) The whole figure implies not the torture of the wicked in a future life, but the destruction, by CHRIST's fiery baptism, of that chaff which surrounds every grain.

"WHOSOEVER SHALL SAY THOU FOOL SHALL BE IN DANGER OF HELL-FIRE." *S. Matt.* v. 22.

The popular interpretation is not unfounded alone, but reduces the words of CHRIST to an absurdity here. "It is incredible that to call a "man a fool should be so much a worse crime "than to call him Raca, that, whereas for the one "offence men are to be brought before a court of "justice, for the other they are to be damned to "an everlasting torment." Need I say further

here that the Hell-fire of this passage is the fire of '*Gehenna*,' the temporary punishment of the criminal.

"FEAR HIM WHICH IS ABLE TO DESTROY BOTH BODY AND SOUL IN HELL."—*S. Matt.* x. 28, *S. Luke* xii. 13.

On any possible view these words do not teach or imply endless torment; if they teach an actual future punishment it is total destruction, not unending pain. But they really point to GOD's power rather than to HIS intention. They say GOD is able to destroy body and soul, they do not say that GOD will do so.

"FOR WHAT IS A MAN PROFITED IF HE SHALL GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL." (LIFE). *S. Matt.* xvi. 26.

This certainly shows that a man by persisting in sin may lose his soul, a loss greater than that of the whole world. But how does this teach *endless* torment, or *endless* sin, or how does it prove anything against a future restitution though to a measure of happiness far lower than if sin had not been persisted in? Further, the context seems to shew that our LORD is here speaking of a coming and of a judgement in the life time of those to whom HE spoke, v. 27-8, and see on ch. xxv. 46 and iii. 12

"HOW SHALL YE ESCAPE THE DAMNATION OF HELL." *S. Matt.* xxiii. 33.

Not one syllable is needed by way of comment here, but to replace a misleading translation by the true rendering—"How shall ye escape

the "judgement of *Gehenna*"—the Jewish punishment awarded to criminals.

"IT IS PROFITABLE FOR THEE THAT ONE OF THY MEMBERS SHOULD PERISH, AND NOT THAT THY WHOLE BODY SHOULD BE CAST INTO HELL.—*Matt.* v. 29-30, and xviii. 8-9.

These two passages are so similar that they may be considered together, and may be compared with *S. Mark* ix. 43-50, where a full comment is given. Here it is enough to say that the 'Hell' of the text is merely '*Gehenna*,' and the punishment, that temporary one inflicted on evil doers. 'Hell-fire' is the fire of *Gehenna*, already explained, 'Everlasting fire,' of chapter xviii. 8, is æonian fire.

"AND THESE SHALL GO AWAY INTO EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT, BUT THE RIGHTEOUS INTO LIFE ETERNAL. *S. Matt.* xxv. 46.

This oft quoted text, if fairly translated, requires an interpretation quite distinct from that of the popular theology, and opposed to it. (a) 'Everlasting' and 'eternal,' merely represent the Greek word *aionios*, and mean of or belonging to an age—æonian, see next chapter. (b) The word translated punishment is a remarkable one, it means, literally, *pruning*, *i.e.*, corrective punishment, and should be so rendered. (c) So that which is threatened is *the opposite* of our popular Hell; it is an æonian discipline, a corrective process, proper to the age—or ages. And of this beneficent purpose there is a hint

often unnoticed in the term applied to those on the left hand, it is properly 'kids' or 'kidlings,' a diminutive, implying a certain affection. (d) But it will no doubt be said, that the same word is applied to the happiness of the saved and to the punishment of the lost, and that if it does not mean endless in the latter case then the bliss of the redeemed is thus rendered uncertain. I reply; even were it so, we are not at liberty to mistranslate the original: but further, no greater error can be imagined than this assertion. The facts are simply these:—In this passage all that is asserted is that a certain 'æonian' penalty, and a certain 'æonian' reward will respectively be the lot of the wicked and of the righteous; so far both the penalty and the reward stand on the same footing. But this *leaves perfectly open* the whole question of the precise duration of either, so far as the present passage goes. For the term æonian is quite indefinite, it does not touch the question of the limit of time; it simply imparts that both reward and penalty go on to a future age or ages. The question, what will happen *after* this age or ages is not raised in this passage. (e) Another important question arises here—to *what time* are we to refer this judgement scene. These words close a *continuous* discourse extending over chapters xxiv-v. There is no break throughout. And remember the question of the disciples, in chapter xxiv. is really not about the end of the 'world,' but of the 'age;' and

CHRIST HIMSELF says, v. 34, *All* the things HE is speaking of should be fulfilled before the passing away of the then generation. "To judge by a "simple straightforward reading of these "chapters, the scene of the Son of Man sitting "upon the throne of HIS glory, belongs as "properly to the time of the destruction of the "temple, as the fleeing of those in Judea into "the mountains."—Rev. J. L. DAVIES.

"IT IS GOOD FOR THEE TO ENTER INTO LIFE MAIMED, RATHER THAN HAVING THY TWO HANDS TO GO INTO HELL, INTO THE UNQUENCHABLE FIRE. * IT IS GOOD FOR THEE TO ENTER INTO LIFE HALT, RATHER THAN HAVING THY TWO FEET TO BE CAST INTO HELL. * IT IS GOOD FOR THEE TO ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD WITH ONE EYE, RATHER THAN HAVING TWO EYES TO BE CAST INTO HELL; WHERE THEIR WORM DIETH NOT, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED. FOR EVERY ONE SHALL BE SALTED WITH FIRE."—*Rev. Vers.* *S. Mark* ix. 43-50.

(a) Note, first, that the revised text *omits* v. 44 and 46, which lend in our ordinary version so much weight to the threats here uttered. (b) Observe next that the whole passage depends on the statement of v. 49—a fact generally overlooked—"*For every one* shall be salted "with "fire." These words assign the reason for the whole preceding clauses, and indeed seem plainly enough to shew that the true reference in this passage is to some sacrificial or purifying process, which *every one* must undergo; as in 1 *Cor.* iii. 13, "The fire shall try every man's work." If

the sacrifice be not made voluntarily—if the eye or the foot be not sacrificed—a sharper sacrifice —a severer penalty will be demanded. (c) The word translated Hell is simply, as already explained, the Jewish Gehenna—the valley of Hinnom—a place of purely *temporary* punishment. (d) The phrase, "where their worm "dieth not and the fire is not quenched," is quoted from the Old Testament, where it occurs in the Septuagint nine times, *Lev.* vi. 13; 2 *Kings* xxii. 17; 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 25; *Isaiah* xxxiv. 10; *Jer.* vii. 20, xvii. 27, xxxi. 12; *Ex.* xx. 47; *Isaiah* lvi. 24. But in *all* these passages the flame is *temporary*. The last is that specially quoted here and the reference is to the worm and to the fire that preyed on the dead bodies of malefactors, cast out into Gehenna. In the striking metaphor of the East, these worms, and this fire are said not to die, and not to be quenched; because the fires were kept constantly burning to drive away pollution, and the worm was always preying on the corpse and offal. The phrase, 'into the fire that never shall 'be quenched,' it will be seen disappears in the Revised Version. The original word is the same already commented on in the note on *S. Matthew* iii. 12, translated 'unquenchable,' and proved to have been frequently applied to a fire, not merely temporary but often *very brief* in its duration. (e) I have already admitted fully the solemn nature of our LORD's threats, in the case of the

ungodly; and I desire as fully to recognise that while Gehenna literally and primarily means the valley of that name, and its temporary penalties, there is very often, doubtless, also in our LORD's words, an allusion to that dark province of the underworld where the Jews believed the souls of the sinful were punished. But this punishment was not believed by them to be endless, which is the point at issue. Nay, the penalties of Gehenna in this sense were by many of the Jews believed to be of brief, nay, of very brief duration.

"HE THAT SHALL BLASPHEME AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST HATH NEVER FORGIVENESS, BUT IS IN DANGER OF ETERNAL DAMNATION."—*S. Mark* iii. 29.

This passage is wholly silent as to endless torment; the harshest view of its meaning does not involve that:* a fact generally forgotten. The context too contains a very wide and elastic promise of forgiveness: "All their sins shall (in

* I may, in passing, observe that it is very interesting to note the attitude of the Fathers towards the sin commonly called unpardonable. "The notion," says BINGHAM "That most of the antients "had of the sin against the Holy Ghost, was not that it was "absolutely unpardonable, but that men were to be punished "for it both in this world and in the next, unless they truly "repented of it."—ii. 921. So ATHANASIUS says of this sin, "If "they repent they *may obtain pardon*, for there is no sin unpardon-"able with GOD to them who truly repent."—*Ib.* ii. 970. So S. CHRYSOSTOM, "We know that this *sin was forgiven to some that "repented* of it." * * What is then the meaning of it? That it is a sin less capable of forgiveness than all others.—*Ib.* 971. So VICTOR, of Antioch, S. AMBROSE, &c. Two points are *very noteworthy*, and I ask attention to them (i.) that these Fathers did *not* believe any sin to be in itself unpardonable, (ii.) that they did *not* believe the phrases *eis ton aiona* or *aionios*, to mean 'never' or 'everlasting' as our version renders them.

"fact) be forgiven to the sons of men, and "blasphemies *wherewith soever* they shall blas- "pheme; but, &c." It also contains a very distinct hint as to forgiveness in a future age, for if some sins were not to be forgiven after death, *S. Matt.* xii. 32 could hardly have been written. The words translated 'never' are, literally, 'for' or 'during the age,' and rather imply that after that indefinite period forgiveness may be had, especially so when the repeated and unequivocal promises of the restitution of all things are considered. A few words may be added on this terrible sin. It is the sin of the Scribes and Pharisees, *i.e.*, of the hard, narrow religionist, and *not* of the ungodly. The sin itself is very clearly defined "because they said HE hath an unclean "spirit," v. 30. Its essence lies in confounding the works of the good and evil Spirits, *e.g.*, assigning to GOD any kind of evil act. On this point I have already spoken (p.p. 33-4). Here I may just ask, must it not be a near approximation to this awful sin to assign to GOD deeds which, like endless torture, our conscience tells us are evil and cruel?

"GOOD WERE IT FOR THAT MAN (JUDAS) IF HE HAD NOT BEEN BORN." *S. Mark* xiv. 21.

(a) The original seems to require a different rendering, 'good were it for HIM, *i.e.*, CHRIST, if 'that man, *i.e.*, JUDAS, had not been born.'—*See margin of Revised Version.* (b) When we

remember how uncompromising in many cases are the Divine threats, which yet are subsequently wholly modified; and when on the other hand we remember the clear and repeated promises of *universal* salvation already quoted, we may well hesitate, and more than hesitate, before we put such a sense on the woe pronounced on JUDAS, as to make it plainly contradict all these promises of Scripture. (c) Remember too the special promise that "*all Israel shall be saved.* JUDAS was assuredly an Israelite. (d) Remember further, that even if taken in their extremest sense, the words of JUDAS' doom *wholly fail* to prove that he was condemned to endless suffering. They would be satisfied to the utmost if JUDAS were to have a sentence of annihilation passed on him at the Last Great Day: nay, had he at the moment of betrayal died "and never suffered "one pang more they would be to the fullest "extent true."

"THE PARABLE OF DIVES." *S. Luke* xvi. 26

(a) DIVES, like JUDAS, is a son of ABRAHAM, who so addresses him, "and *all* Israel shall be "saved," says S. PAUL, expressly. (b) DIVES was certainly not in Hell, but in Hades (as our Revised Version admits), in the intermediate state before the Day of Judgement, not in a state absolutely fixed. (c) DIVES is represented as distinctly improved by his chastisement: he has learned to think for others. Can GOD by HIS

discipline *produce this amendment merely to crush it out in a future state of hopeless pain?* Is this credible? (d) It is not said that the gulf shall continue impassible; what is said is, that it is so (was then so). The case is as if a man were imprisoned for a fixed time, and his friends are sternly told "between him and you is "a barrier placed which cannot be passed." This would be exactly true, though the barrier were to be removed, when the fixed period of punishment ceased. (e) And even were this not so, who are we to say that the gulf, impassable to man, cannot be passed by CHRIST, by HIM who hath the "*Keys of Death and Hell?*" (f) Those inclined to doubt what I have above said may be well referred to the words of the great S. AMBROSE, who, commenting on *Ps.* cviii. says thus, "So then that DIVES in the Gospel, "although a sinner, is pressed with penal agonies "that he may *escape the sooner*," thus asserting clearly his belief in DIVES' final salvation.

"HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT THE SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE." *S. John* iii. 36.

Here the meaning is clear; the unbeliever, *continuing such*, shall not see life, but if he cease to be an unbeliever, he may surely obtain peace. If it were not so, all would be lost. If the sense put popularly on this passage were true, 'no man 'once an unbeliever could have any hope.

"THE RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION." *S. John* v. 29

Here it is hardly needful to do more than

point to the revised translation, 'the resurrection 'of *judgement*,' not even condemnation, which would be a different Greek word.

We have now considered, if not all, yet certainly all the strongest passages contained in the New Testament, and supposed to teach the popular creed, except those of the mysterious book of *Revelation*. To this now let us turn. And here, at the outset, I protest against the utter unfairness of attempting to build any definite theory of Hell on the imagery of a book of mysterious visions, and full of highly-toned Oriental metaphors. Its visions speak the language not of prose but of poetry, and that the poetry of an Eastern race, far more imaginative and highly wrought than that of the West. To judge these metaphors as though they spoke the language of theology is worse than unfair, it is even absurd.

Take, then, the passages most often quoted. Turn to chapter xiv. 9-11. Terrible as it seems at first sight, it is really concerned with the times of NERO—who is the Beast. The worshippers of the Beast who are to be tormented, are his followers, and the reference in the torment is simply to the terrible earthly calamities actually happening to Rome at that epoch. Who, of whatever school of thought, is there who does not feel a weight rolled away, when he perceives

that the true meaning of the highly wrought metaphors of this passage—as to the worshippers of the Beast being tormented night and day, in the presence of the Lamb and the Holy Angels—may be most fully found in the terrible earthly sufferings which befell Rome, "while the Lamb "and the Holy Angels are, in human language, "represented as cognisant of this punishment? "The smoke which ascends for ever and ever," should be for 'æons of æons,' 'ages of ages.' This is a phrase borrowed partly from *Genesis* xix, 28, and partly from *Isaiah* xxxiv. 9-10, both of which refer to *temporal judgements*. "and may "very well, in the highly figurative language of "prophecy, have such application in the Apoca-"lypse, without the remotest allusion to the state "of souls in the world beyond the grave." Even Mr. ELLIOTT, in his *Horæ Apocalypticæ*, explains this passage of merely temporary judgement, see *Mercy and Judgement*, p. 470. Note too in this connection—as showing the true meaning of the highly wrought metaphors of the East—the deeply impassioned language in which ISAIAH describes the temporal calamities of the land of Idumea (in the passage referred to above), its streams are "to be turned into pitch—*its* "*dust into brimstone—its land into burning pitch* "*—it shall not be quenched night nor day—its* "*smoke is to go up for ever.*" Now when we know that these metaphors—sounding so awfully, do yet refer to merely temporal judgement—to

judgements of a momentary duration, so to speak, we shall the better be able to assign its true meaning to all the figurative and poetical language of this book of *Revelation*. I therefore must ask you to bear ever in mind how unfair, nay, impossible, it is to harden into dogmas the glowing metaphors of Eastern poetry, if we desire to reach their true meaning. In fact, if such language be taken literally its whole meaning is lost. If, *e.g.*, even in the case of some of our LORD'S words, which are less figurative—I take them literally—I pervert their sense. Am I in very deed to *hate* my father and mother because CHRIST says it is necessary so to do: or to pluck out my right eye literally? Or take a case—well put by Canon FARRAR—to shew how widely the true sense of the figures of Scripture differs from the literal meaning. Egypt is more than once said, in the Bible, to have been an *iron furnace* to the Jews; and yet their condition there was so far removed from being one of torment, that they actually said, "it was "well with us there," and positively sighed for its enjoyments. In common fairness, therefore, I am forced to maintain that no doctrine of endless pain can be based on figures of Eastern imagery. Having then, already considered the well-known passage in ch. xiv., it will be sufficient if I close this chapter by an examination of another often quoted passage.

"BUT THE FEARFUL AND UNBELIEVING * * SHALL HAVE THEIR PART IN THE LAKE THAT BURNETH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE: WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH." *Revelation* xxi. 8.

(a) It will be necessary to consider the entire context of this verse, if we desire to understand its purport. It opens with the vision of the great white throne, ch. xx. 14, and we find that after the judgement of that Great Day, so far from death and Hell (Hades) continuing, they are "cast into a lake of fire"—very unlike, nay, contradicting the popular view.

(b) Then comes a declaration, that GOD is to dwell with men—not with the saints—but with men as such, and that as a consequence, they shall be *His people, and God shall be with them, and be their God.*

(c) It is distinctly said, there shall be *no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain.* Is this not a denial of an endless Hell rather than an affirmation of it—nay an emphatic denial of such a doctrine?

(d) Then comes a voice from the throne with a glorious promise, "*Behold I make all things* "*new*," not some things. Note, too, this promise is remarkably emphasised, it opens with the word "*Behold*" to draw attention to it: it closes with the command to write it, 'for these words are 'true and faithful.' Was there no reason for this? Is there not thus attention drawn to this as the central point of the whole vision—*all things*

made new? But this again is a denial of the popular creed.

(e) In close connection with such promises come the highly figurative threats of the lake of fire. It is perhaps just possible that this may imply, although I do not think so, the destruction of those cast into it; but it is *wholly impossible to understand it as teaching endless torment* in the face of what has just been promised—no more crying, nor pain, v. 4. Therefore, I cannot but conclude, looking at the repeated promises (see 'c' and 'd') of this very passage, which contrast in their *perfect clearness* with the highly figurative language of its threats,* looking at the true meaning of GOD's judgements and at the whole spirit of Holy Scripture—nay, its express declaration of universal pardon—that what is here taught is some sharp, fiery, discipline—a fire that purifies while it punishes—a fire that is, in GOD's mysterious way, an agent in making all things new.

We thus see that the Apocalyptic visions lend as little support to the dogma of endless torment

* "How little can we build dogmas on such metaphors as the "Devil being cast with the Beasts (NERO and the Roman world-"powers) and the false Prophet—ch. xx. 10-14—into the lake of fire "and brimstone * * * into which also are to be cast two "such abstract entities as 'Death' and 'Hades.' At any rate this "lake of fire is on the earth; and immediately *afterwards* we read of "that earth being destroyed, and of a *new* Heaven and a *new* earth, "in which there is to be *no more death or curse*."—Canon FARRAR.

as do the other Scriptures. That doctrine is not, I am deeply persuaded, to be found in a single passage of GOD'S word, if translated accurately and fairly interpreted. And here let me, as I conclude this branch of our subject, before passing on, ask those who honestly believe, that with this dogma of Hell-fire is bound up the sole force able to deter men from sin, to remember that to assert this is to contradict the whole weight of human experience. For in every age experience has shewn decisively, that it is not the magnitude of the penalty that deters men from sin or crime, it is the certainty of its infliction. Nay, it must be said on the contrary, that few doctrines have done so much in these days to shake the belief in any real punishment of sin hereafter as that of an endless Hell. For as I have already briefly attempted to prove (p. 38-9) nobody can be found who, *by his acts*, shews that he in fact believes and accepts so terrible a dogma. From this it follows, that so long as it is taught, the whole subject of future punishment becomes, for the mass of mankind, doubtful, shadowy, and unreal. Thus a tone of secret incredulity is fostered, an incredulity which, beginning at this particular dogma assuredly does not end there, but affects the whole of revealed religion.

It is not merely that those who still teach the popular creed thus furnish the sceptic with the choicest of his weapons, by enlisting the moral

forces of our nature on the side of unbelief. They do more than this. They thus, unconsciously I admit, but most effectively, teach men to profess a creed with the lips to which the spirit and the life render no vital allegiance. By this means the whole Gospel of JESUS CHRIST is lowered and discredited, for if men see a doctrine of this kind maintained in words but in fact denied, (because in practice found to be wholly incredible) they will assuredly apply the lesson, so learned, of professed belief and real scepticism, to the whole system of Christian truth.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF "THE AGES," OF "DEATH," OF "JUDGEMENT," "OF FIRE," "OF ELECTION."

"The ende of their wrath and punyshemente intendeth nothynge "elles but the destruction of vices and savynge of menne: wyth so "usyinge and ordering them that they cannot chuse but be good "and what harm so ever they did before, in the residewe of theyr, "life to make amendes for the same."—Sir T. More—*Utopia.*

In the last chapter we have considered the proofs, often drawn from certain passages of the New Testament, in favour of the ordinary view of future punishment, and have seen how completely they fail to teach its unending character when fairly translated and fairly understood. In the present chapter I propose to complete our examination of the Scriptural argument by a discussion of the teaching of the Bible as to the various topics referred to in the heading of this chapter, which have a very close relation to the subject of future punishment. To this discussion we now turn.

First, let us, in order to ascertain the scriptural doctrine of 'the ages,' consider the true meaning of the words *aion* and *aionios*.* These are the originals of the terms rendered by our translators 'eternal,' 'everlasting,' 'for ever and ever:' and on this translation, so misleading, and indeed wholly incorrect, a vast portion of the popular dogma of endless torment is built up. I say, without hesitation, misleading and incorrect; for *aion* means 'an age,' a limited period, whether long or short, though often of indefinite length; and the adjective *aionios* means 'of the age,' 'age-long,' 'æonian' and *never* 'everlasting' (of its own proper force): it is true that it may be applied as an epithet to things that are endless, but the idea of endlessness in all such cases comes not from the epithet, but only because it is inherent in the object to which the epithet is applied, as in the case of GOD. Indeed so far from endless duration being implied by the term

* "The word by itself, whether adjective or substantive, never "means endless."—Canon FARRAR. "The conception of eternity, "in the Semitic languages, is that of a long duration and series of "ages."—Rev. J. S. BLUNT—*Dict. of Theology*. "'Tis notoriously "known," says Bishop RUST, "that the Jews, whether writing in "Hebrew or Greek, do by *olam* (the Hebrew word corresponding to "*aion*) and *aion* mean any remarkable period and duration, whether it "be of life, or dispensation, or polity." "The word *aion* is never "used in Scripture, or any where else, in the sense of endlessness "(vulgarly called eternity), it always meant, both in Scripture and "out, a period of time; else how could it have a plural—how could "you talk of the *œons* and *œons* of *œons* as the Scripture does."—C. KINGSLEY.

aionios, it sometimes includes hardly any idea of duration at all. Sometimes, as in *St. John*, the æonian life (eternal † life) of which he speaks is a life not measured by its duration, but a life in the unseen—life in GOD. Again, a point of great importance is this, that it would have been impossible for the Jews to accept CHRIST, except by assigning a limited—nay a *very limited* duration—to those Mosaic ordinances which were said in the Old Testament to be 'for ever," to be 'everlasting' (æonian). *Every line of the New Testament is thus in fact a comment on the limited sense of aionios.*

As a further illustration of the meaning of *aion* and *aionios* let me point out that in the Greek version of the Old Testament—in use in our LORD'S time—and whose authority therefore should be decisive on this point—these terms are *repeatedly* applied to things that have long ceased to exist. Take a few instances out of many. Thus the AARONIC priesthood is said to be 'everlasting,' *Num.* xxv, 13. The land of Canaan is given as an 'everlasting' possession, and 'for 'ever,' *Gen.* xvii. and xiii., 15. In *Deut.* xxiii, 3, 'for ever' is distinctly made an equivalent to 'even to the tenth generation.' In *Lam.* v., 19,

† It is well to remember that in this book I have, as a rule, used the term 'eternal' in its popular sense of endless.

'for ever and ever' is the equivalent of from 'generation to generation.' The inhabitants of Palestine are to be bondsmen 'for ever,' *Lev.* xxv. 46. In *Num.* xviii. 19, the heave offerings of the holy things are a covenant 'for ever.' CALEB obtains his inheritance 'for ever,' *Josh.* xiv. 9, etc. Another instance from the Old Testament may be found in *Isaiah* xxxii. 14, where we are told 'the forts and towers shall be 'dens *for ever*, *until* the spirit be poured upon 'us.' These instances* might be very largely increased, but enough has probably been said to prove that it is wholly impossible, and indeed *absurd*, to contend that any idea of endless duration is necessarily implied by either *aion* or *aionios*.

Notwithstanding all this, our translation, though often translating *aion* by terms which are strictly finite, has steadily adhered to the terms 'eternal' and 'everlasting' as the equivalent of *aionios*; against this we have only to offer the strongest protest. Further, if this translation of *aionios* as 'eternal' be correct, *aion* must mean eternity. But so to render it would reduce the word of GOD to an absurdity. Let me give you some instances of the result of translating *aion*

* So in *Jude* vii. Sodom and Gomorrah are said to be suffering the vengeance of eternal (æonian) fire, *i.e.*, their temporal overthrow by fire.

by eternity. In the first place, you would have over and over again to talk of the 'eternities.' We can comprehend what 'eternity' is, but what are the 'eternities?' You cannot have more than one eternity. The Doxology would run thus: "Thine is the kingdom, the power and "the glory, 'unto the eternities.'" Take another instance. In the case of the sin against the Holy Ghost, the translation would then be, "it shall "not be forgiven him 'neither in this eternity "nor in that to come.'" Our LORD's words, *St. Matt.* xiii. 39, would then run, "the harvest is "the end of (the) eternity," which is to make our LORD talk nonsense. Again, in *St. Mark* iv. 19, the translation should be, "the cares," not of this world, but "the cares of this eternity choke "the word." In *St. Luke* xvi. 8, "The children "of this world" should be "the children of this "eternity." *Romans* vii. 2, should run thus: "Be not conformed to this eternity." In 1 *Cor.*, x. 11, the words "upon whom the ends of the "world are come," should be "the ends of the "eternities." Take next, *Gal.* i. 4: "That HE "might deliver us from this present evil world," should run thus, "from this present evil eternity." In 2 *Timothy* iv. 10, the translation should be 'DEMAS hath forsaken me, having loved this 'present eternity.' Take a last example, 'Now 'once at the end of the ages hath HE been mani-'fested' should read, on the popular view, 'at the 'end of the eternities.' Let me state the dilemma

clearly. *Aion* either means eternity (endless duration) as its necessary or at least its ordinary significance, or it does not. If it does, the following difficulties at once arise: 1—How, if it mean an infinite period, can *aion* have a plural? 2—How came such phrases to be used as those repeatedly occurring in Scripture, where *aion* is added to *aion*, if *aion* is of itself infinite? 3—How come such a phrase as for the '*aion*' and beyond?—*See (Sept.) Ex.* 15-18; *Dan.* xii. 3; *Micah* iv. 5. 4—How is it that we repeatedly read of the *end* of the *aion*?—*St. Matt.* xiii. 39-40-49; xxiv. 3; xxviii. 20; 1 *Cor.* xii.; *Heb.* ix. 26-5. 5. Finally, if *aion* be infinite why is it applied over and over to what is strictly finite? *e.g., St. Mark* iv. 19; *Acts* iii. 21; *Rom.* xii. 2; 1 *Cor.* i. 20, ii. 6, iii. 18, x. 11, &c., &c. But if it be not infinite, what right is there to render the adjective *aionios* (which depends for its meaning on *aion)* by the terms 'eternal' and 'everlasting?'

There is much more to be said. Besides persisting in a rendering so misleading, our Translators have really done further hurt to those who can only read their English Bible. They have, in fact, wholly obscured, a very important doctrine, that of 'the ages,' This when fully understood throws a flood of light on the whole plan of redemption, and the method of the Divine working, as we shall see. It will be interesting if I give you a few instances to

illustrate this fact. You will, I think, see how much force and clearness is gained by restoring to the Bible the true rendering of the words *aion* and *aionios*. I will begin by a well-known passage, *S. Matt.* xxiv. 3. There our version represents the disciples as asking JESUS 'what 'should be the sign of the end of the world.' It should be the end of the 'age,' the close, in fact, of the Jewish age or dispensation marked by the fall of Jerusalem. In *S. Matt.* xiii. 39-40-49, the true rendering is not the end of the 'world,' but of the 'age,' a change of much significance. So *S. John* xvii. 3, 'this is life eternal,' should be 'the life of the ages,' *i.e.*, peculiar to those ages in which the scheme of salvation is being worked out. Or, take three passages of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* v. 9; ix. 12; and xiii. 20, 'eternal salvation' should be 'æonian' or of the ages; 'eternal redemption' is the redemption of the ages, the eternal covenant is the 'covenant 'of the ages,' the covenant peculiar to the ages, of redemption. In *Ephesians* iii. 11, 'the eternal 'purpose' is really the purpose of 'the ages,' *i.e.*, developed, worked out in 'the ages.' In the same Epistle, chapter iii. 21, there occurs a suggestive phrase, as usual altogether obscured by our version, 'unto all the generations of the age 'of the ages.' Thus it runs in the original, and it is surely not dealing fairly with GOD's word to wrap up this elaborate statement which gives such prominence to the 'ages' in the mere paraphrase

of our version 'throughout all ages.' In 1 *Cor.* x. 11, 'the ends of the world' are the 'ends of 'the ages.' In the same Epistle, chapter ii. 6-7-8, the word *aion* occurs four times translated 'world' it should be 'age' or 'ages' in all cases.

Again in *Hebrews* xi. 3, 'by whom HE made the world' should be 'the ages.' In *Hebrews* ix. 26, 'now once in the end of the world hath 'HE appeared' should be 'in the end of the ages.' Again, the closing words of S. JUDE present us with a remarkable instance of the use of this word *aion*.* It is literally, 'To the only GOD, 'be glory, majesty, dominion, and power—before 'every age—and now, and unto all the ages,' *i.e.*, before the ages began, and now, and throughout all the ages yet to come. So in *Rev.* i. 6, we have 'glory and dominion' ascribed unto CHRIST, 'unto the ages of the ages,' in the original. Again in 1 *Tim.* i. 17, 'the King eternal' should be 'the King of ages;' vi. 17, 'charge them that 'are rich in this world' should be 'in this age.' 2 *Peter* ii. 17, 'the mist of darkness is reserved 'for ever' should be 'for the age,' for a period finite but indefinite. A striking phrase closes this Epistle, ch. iii. 18—wholly obscured in our translation—which renders 'to HIM be glory

* Take as an instance of the hard measure dealt by our Revised Version to this word *aion;* you will find in a very short compass—the epistle of S. PAUL to the Ephesians—that it employs—to translate *aion—four different* English words or phrases (in ch. i. 21, ch. ii. 2, 7. and ch. iii. 11).

'both now and for ever,' instead of, as the original requires, 'unto the day of the age,' see v. 8, which explains the reference. This list I might, without difficulty, have increased, but enough has been said to shew the prominence given in Scripture to the doctrine 'of the ages.' For who can fail to see, in these repeated instances from Holy Scripture, at least some definite purpose in the use of these peculiar terms; or who can refrain from the deepest regret that our Translators should have so steadily refused to acknowledge this plain fact.

Let me now try to state briefly and clearly what the doctrine of 'the ages' is. I borrow the words of Mr. JUKES: "It will, I think, be found "that the adjective—*œonian*—whether applied "to 'life,' 'punishment,' 'covenant,' 'times,' or "even GOD HIMSELF, is always connected with "remedial labour, and with the idea of ages or "periods, in which GOD is working to meet and "correct some awful fall." There is present in the word in fact a certain spiritual or ethical force, and a reference to 'the ages' in which a redeeming process is going on. It is the more needful to insist on this, because in our recoil from the Roman Catholic teaching about purgatory, masses for the dead, etc., we have gone too far into the opposite extreme, we have from our childhood been trained to limit all GOD's possible dealings with us, to the narrow span of our brief

earthly existence. But surely this is to shut our eyes to the truer and higher teaching of the gospel. What does GOD mean by the repeated reference to these 'ages,' when HE speaks in the New Testament of HIS redeeming plan? On the popular view these passages go for nothing. Is this fair or reasonable? But by accepting what they plainly teach, we are enabled to harmonize GOD'S threatenings with HIS clearly expressed purpose to save all men finally.

Therefore, we who teach the larger hope feel constrained to believe, that in these 'ages' is indicated the true scope of redemption, as a vast plan, the accomplishment of which is spread over many periods or stages, of which our present life forms but one, and it may be, a very brief part. Through these 'ages' it seems clearly taught in Scripture that CHRIST'S work is to go on, for 'CHRIST *is the same* to-day, and yesterday, and 'unto the ages,' *Heb.* xiii. 8; and HE assures us that HE is alive unto the ages, and has the 'keys of death and of Hades,' *Rev.* i. 18 (the true rendering), words significant in this connection. This, then, on the plain warrant of Scripture (although our translation completely obscures the fact), we believe to be the 'purpose 'of the ages,' *Eph.* iii. 11. We believe that not in this brief life only, but through future ages, CHRIST'S work shall go on till, as we hope from HIS own teaching, the last straying sheep

shall have been found by the Good Shepherd. Nay, we are permitted in Holy Scripture a momentary glance beyond that limit—in these all-glorious words:—'Then,' at the expiry it would seem of these ages,* 'cometh the *end*,' when every enemy vanquished, 'CHRIST shall 'have delivered up the kingdom unto GOD, and 'GOD shall be All in All.'—1 *Cor.* XV. 24.

Another class of texts, to which I ask your attention, are those which speak of 'death' and 'destruction' as the portion of the ungodly. To ascertain the true meaning, let us enquire what is meant by death

There are two answers commonly given. First comes that of the popular creed which says death in the case of sinners means *living for ever* in pain and torment; so that I am actually required to believe that *death means life protracted for ever in pain*, and that destruction means preservation in eternal anguish! The recoil from such incredible teaching has produced the second view of 'death' as meaning 'annihi-'lation,' now maintained by those who teach the doctrine of 'conditional immortality.'—See pp. 11-3.

* It is worth while reminding my readers that our Revised Version has very frequently admitted the correct rendering of *aion* as *age* into the margin. Let us hope that in the final revision, which one day must be undertaken, this rendering will appear in the text.

In answer to this strange and novel teaching,* I would ask, in the words of an author already quoted, "are any of the varied deaths which "Scripture speaks of as incident to man, his non-"existence or annihilation? Take as examples "the deaths referred to by S. PAUL, in the sixth, "seventh and eighth chapters of the Epistle to "the *Romans*. We read (ch. vii. 7) 'He that is "dead is free from sin.' Is this 'death' which "is freedom from sin, non-existence or annihila-"tion? Again, when the Apostle says (ch. vii. "9) 'I was alive without the law once, but when "the commandment came sin revived, and I "died.' Was this 'death,' wrought in him by "the law, annihilation? Again, when he says "(ch. viii. 6), 'To be carnally minded is death,' "is this death non-existence or annihilation? "And again, when he says (ch. viii. 38) 'Neither "death nor life shall separate us,' is the 'death' "here referred to annihilation? When ADAM "died on the day he sinned (*Gen.* ii. 17), was "this annihilation? when his body died, and "turned to dust (*Gen.* v. 5), was this annihila-"tion? Is our 'death in trespasses and sins' "(*Eph.* ii. 1-2) annihilation? Is our 'death to "sin' (*Rom.* vi. 11), annihilation. * * Do

* See pages 2-3 for some remarks on this theory, which I do not discuss at any length persuaded that it has no prospect of permanent acceptance (i.) as being opposed to the deepest instincts of our nature (ii.) being founded on a wholly superficial view of Scripture (iii) as leaving quite untouched the great central difficulty of the triumph of evil, a point forgotten by its ablest champions.

"not these and similar uses of the word prove "beyond all question, that whatever else these "deaths may be, not one of them is non-"existence or annihilation?"

But if death be neither living for ever in pain, nor annihilation, what then is it? Death is bodily dissolution; it is for man 'a separation 'from some given form of life which he has lived 'in;' it is the way out of one state of being into another. Thus understood, how should death shut out hope? Nor is it really opposed to life, in fact it is a pathway to life; nay, the very condition of life in many cases. 'Except a corn of 'wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth 'alone, but *if it die* it bringeth forth much fruit, *S. John* vii. 24.* Is there not here a great truth hinted at of universal application? Is not the connection of a very real and vital one between dying and life? and so the Apostle says that 'he 'that is *dead* is freed from sin,' *Rom.* v. 27, *i.e.*, is alive to GOD. Cannot it be that this death threatened against the ungodly is, after all, the way, however sharp, to life even for them? The words of S. PAUL, *Rom.* xi. 15, 'what shall the 'reconciling of them be but *life from the dead;*'

* I confine myself, in attempting to bring out the true significance of 'death' to the New Testament. In the Old Testament its threatenings, of 'death' and 'destruction,' are, if not exclusively, mainly temporal, as are its rewards.

on the view generally held these words, so significant to the thoughtful, lose all real force.

And yet those who uphold the popular creed assume that to die is the end of all hope to the sinful. Again, let me ask, on what authority is this docrine taught, unknown to antiquity, unknown to Scripture? Who commissioned any to teach, that to die is to pass into a state beyond the reach of CHRIST'S grace? If so, why are we told so significantly, the story of CHRIST evangelising the spirits in prison? Why does the Apostle tell us that the *Gospel was preached to the dead?* or why these repeated and exultant questions, 'O death where is thy victory?' 'O 'death where is thy sting?' Why has the New Testament, with such varied illustrations, pressed on us this fact, that CHRIST has overcome death, has destroyed death, if death is to put a stop to HIS power to save? So far from this, S. PAUL in aid of his argument in the famous chapter on the resurrection, invokes the analogy of nature, as shewing that death is a path to life, a condition of life. 'Thou fool,' says the great Apostle, 'that which thou sowest is not quickened *except* '*it die.*'

Who shall limit this truth in its operation? It certainly does hold good in many cases in the spiritual order—of that we are assured. 'If we 'be *dead* with HIM, we shall live with HIM.'—

2 *Tim.* ii. 11. 'We which live are always 'delivered unto *death* for JESUS' sake, that the '*life* also of JESUS might be manifested in us.'—2 *Cor.* iv. 11. And so it is written. 'He that 'loseth his life shall save it'—a statement often repeated in the gospels. 'And if ye mortify the 'deeds of the body ye shall live.' Thus, too, the Psalmist strikingly prays 'that the wicked may 'perish, in order that they may know that GOD 'reigns over the earth.' May not death then be the very instrument by which GOD quickens the sinner, and that in two ways? i. By the death of the body, which takes a man out of the present age into a state more fitted to rouse and to save. ii. By the death of the spirit, *i.e.*, its being searched through and through by GOD's fiery discipline—by HIS sharp surgery—till it die to sin and live to righteousness.

In all this subject of death there is a strange narrowness in the views yet held generally, so unlike the old faith of the Catholic Church—so blindly traditional—as though the fact of dying could change GOD's unchanging purpose; as though HIS never failing love were extinguished because we pass into a new state of existence; as though the power of CHRIST's cross were exhausted in the brief span of our earthly life. So far from this, has not CHRIST abolished *death?* Is HE not Lord of the *dead?* Did HE

not evangelise the *dead?* Has HE not the keys of *death?* On the popular view, what depth of meaning can you assign to these words?

This view of 'death' and 'destruction' has the fullest theological authority. In its favour many passages might be cited from Fathers, and modern theologians alike. The general principle is clearly put by TERTULLIAN in the following words—"Thus all things are "repaired by corrupting, are preserved by "perishing, and revive by dying."—*Apol.* 48. Perhaps I ought here to ask my readers to refer to pp. 84-5, where they will find some interesting patristic citations on this point, *e.g.*, those which regard death as a remoulding by the heavenly Potter of the earthly vessels HE has made, in order to remove all flaws. I add also the following, which take the same view of death. So S. CLEMENT asserts that "the law "in ordering the sinner to be put to death "(*tolli de medio*) designs his being brought from "death to life."—*Strom. lib.* vii. In the same sense ORIGEN comments on the words, "When "HE slew them then they sought HIM."—*Psalm* lxxviii. 34. "He does not say that some sought "HIM after others had been slain, but HE says "that the destruction of those who were killed "was of such a nature that, when put to death, "they sought GOD."—*De prin.* ii. 8. "The "Scriptures," says S. METHODIUS (3rd century),

"usually call destruction, the turning to the "better at some future time."—*De resur.* viii.

S. GREGORY, of Nyssa, has much to the same effect. "It is impossible that life should "be in man unless it enters by death," and he adds forcibly, "Si non moriatur anima, semper "manet mortua."—*In Cant. Cantic.* Perhaps the most striking passage is one in which he refers to the 'second death.' "They who live "in the flesh ought, by virtuous conversation, to "free themselves from fleshly lusts, lest *after* "*death, they should again need another death*, to "cleanse away the remains of fleshly vice that "cling to them."—*De anin. et resurr.* This shows this eminent Father as teaching the cleansing and healing agency of even the 'second death.' Again we find S. GREGORY thus writing on the 59th Psalm, where the destruction of GOD'S enemies is spoken of. "From which consideration we understand that "there will not be a destruction of the "individuals themselves, lest *God's handiwork* "*should come to nothing*, but that in place of "their persons, their *sin shall perish*, and shall "be annihilated. * * For when no guilt *is* "*any where left*, GOD shall be sovereign of the "ends of the earth; when the evil that now "reigns over many shall have been taken "away."—(See page 120). "When the Psalmist "prays, let sinners and the unrighteous be

"destroyed, he is (really) praying that sin and "unrighteousness may perish. * * His "prayer is that sin may come to an end."—*De orat. Or.* i. The passage continues thus—"And if there be found any such prayer elsewhere (in the Scriptures), it has exactly the "same meaning, viz., that of expelling the sin, "and not of destroying the man."—*Ib.*

I now turn to S. JEROME, whose views on this point have already been quoted (pp. 97-119). The following is interesting — "All GOD's "enemies shall perish, not that they shall cease "to exist, but *cease to be enemies.*" And note how far S. JEROME pushes this principle, even it would seem to asserting the salvation of the 'Man of sin,' for the passage proceeds thus—"Just as S. PAUL writes to the Thessalonians "(of the Man of sin), whom the Lord shall slay "with the breath of HIS mouth. (So) This "slaying signifies *not annihilation* but the "*cessation of the evil life* in which they formerly "used to live."—*In Mic.* v. 8. Elsewhere S. JEROME represents GOD as saying, "Ideo occido "ut vivificem."—*In Es.* lvii, words which comprise the whole view of death as taught in the Scriptures. Of modern writers I shall quote two only. "None," says CANON WESTCOTT, "can fail to see, upon reflection, how the two "Sacraments speak of *death*, and *life through* "*death*, of life given away, and life received

"again." — *Hist. Faith.* "In some most "wonderful sense man must die, that he may be "delivered from his pravity."—*Maurice, Theol. "Essays.*"

And what is true of 'death' as threatened against the sinner is true no less of 'judgement,' even in its most extreme form. We are not without very distinct teaching in Holy Scripture on this point. It has been already noticed how, in the minor Prophets, the vision of universal bliss is ever associated with a vision of '*judgement*' (see pp. 129-31). Why is this so significantly done? It is because the way to blessedness lies *through* the Divine judgements. In these often unperceived connections lies surely much of the deepest teaching of Holy Scripture. On the popular view this connection of judgement and blessedness loses all meaning. 'Judgement,' in fact, like 'fire,' is the portion of *all*, and not of the sinner merely. It must begin at the House of GOD. 'HE scourgeth '*every* son whom HE receiveth.' True—you may say of the son—but what of the sinner, is there hope for him in GOD's judgements? Does GOD's judgement mean mercy in his case? Surely, I reply, of this truth Scripture is full. Take for instance S. PETER's words, as he tells the story of the preaching of CHRIST to the spirits in prison (a passage that even if it stood alone would shew how untenable is the popular view

as to the state after death). The spirits are specially described as those of the *disobedient* dead—those who rejected NOAH'S preaching. From their case S. PETER turns to speak to the ungodly of his own day, and warns them, that they shall have to give account to HIM who is ready to judge the quick and dead. And mark what follows: 'For this cause,' he adds, 'was 'the gospel preached, (even) to the *dead*, that 'they might be *judged* according to men in the 'flesh, but *live* according to GOD in the spirit.' Is not judgement here most closely related, not to damnation, for the sinner, but to spiritual life, is it not the path to life?

Would you have further proof? Consider next what S. PAUL says of the case of HYMENÆUS and ALEXANDER—1 *Tim.* i. 20. They had put away a good conscience, had become blasphemers, had made shipwreck of faith. He thereupon hands *them over to Satan.* You can hardly imagine a more desperate state. Thrust by Apostolic authority out of GOD'S Church, and handed over to GOD'S enemy, and that after having made shipwreck of their faith. But what follows? It is that they may *learn* not to blaspheme. This terrible judgement was a cure —a path to life and restoration. "The Devil," says S. JEROME in his striking way, "is, as it "were, GOD'S executioner. They who "walk not rightly are handed over to the

"Devil. Wherefore? That they may perish "eternally? And where then is the mercy of "GOD? Where is the tender Father? What "the Apostle says is this, I have handed over "sinners to the Devil, that, tormented by him, "they may be converted to me."—In *Psalm* 107.

In this connection, as shewing how the utmost conceivable severity of the Divine judgements is consistent with final salvation. I ask you next to remember how S. PAUL tells of Israel that 'wrath is come upon them to the 'uttermost.'—1 *Thess.* ii. 16. The wrath of GOD to the *uttermost!* and yet the same Apostle tells us that *all Israel shall be saved!* Weigh well these words and what they convey. It is as though the cup of Divine vengeance was drained to the last drop, as though GOD had exhausted all His vials of anger, and left HIMSELF no more than HE could do. And even then does all this wrath mean that hope is at an end, that salvation is impossible? It means the very reverse. Not only is hope still remaining, not merely is there a chance of salvation, but salvation is promised, is assured; nay, salvation in its amplest form—salvation to the uttermost (for *all* Israel shall be saved)—is the end of wrath to the uttermost.

Another equally striking instance of the

connection of judgement with life and amendment, is furnished by S. PAUL's treatment of the incestuous Corinthian. 'I have *judged* already 'in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, to 'deliver such an one *unto Satan* for the 'destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be '*saved* in the day of the LORD JESUS.'—1 *Cor.* v. 3. Few more suggestive passages exist in the New Testament. Here is a man delivered by Apostolic authority—in the name of JESUS CHRIST—to Satan, handed over to Satan. But mark the object and the result. It is to end not in misery but in joy—not in death but in life—say rather in life attained by means of GOD's awful judgement.* What light is thus thrown (for are not these things written for our learning?) on the mysterious subject of GOD's judgements—nay of His vengeance.† "O mon "ame sois tranquille et attends en paix le jour "des vengeances eternelles, c'est le jour de "CHRIST, et ce sont les vengeances de CHRIST. "C'est donc *un jour de salut, et ce sont des "vengeances d'amour.*"—G. MONOD, *Le Judgement dernier*, p. 28.

* "Destruction itself may be the very condition of salvation. "* * * This wretched Corinthian was, as we know, "delivered *from* the power of the Devil by being delivered *into* the "power of the Devil."—*The Larger Hope.*

† Bearing in mind these considerations, can we not understand the otherwise strange insertion of the clause about vengeance in the well known passage describing CHRIST's mission. "To proclaim the "acceptable year of the LORD, and *the day of vengeance* of our GOD." —*Isaiah* lxi. 2?

And so the fact of GOD's coming to judgement is a matter of deep joy. The Psalmist bids the sea to roar, the floods to clap their hands, the hills to sing for joy, at the prospect of judgement (as being a part of the great scheme of redemption). So deeply important at once, and yet so generally misunderstood is this (the only true and Scriptural view of judgement), that it will be needful to examine more closely the testimony of GOD's word on this point. The more we study its pages, the more clear does the fact become, that *salvation is essentially linked with the divine judgements.* "Thou, Lord, art "merciful," says the Psalmist, "for thou "renderest to every man according to his "work." Here is the essence of the question—*retribution is mercy, judgement means salvation.* "The thought," says MAURICE, "of GOD's "ceasing to punish is the real—the unutterable "horror. Wrath is not the counteracting force "to love, but the attribute of it." So the Prophet tells us that Israel has been pardoned *because* she has been punished.—*Is.* xl. 1-2. So it is said, "Zion shall be *redeemed with* "*judgement.*"—*Is.* i. 27. When thy judgements "are in the earth the inhabitants of the world "learn righteousness, for the Lord is a *God of* "*judgement.*"—*Is.* xxvi. 9. "A king shall "reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule "in *judgement*, and a man shall be an hiding 'place from the wind."—*Is.* xxxii. 1. "The

"Lord hath filled Zion with *judgement* * * "and there shall be abundance of *salvation*."—*Is.* xxxiii. 5-6. "I will make my *judgement* "to rest for a light of the peoples. * * My "*salvation* is gone forth."—*Is.* li. 4-5. Again speaking of CHRIST as the branch, the Prophet tells how "HE shall execute *judgement* * * in "the land. In those days Judah shall be *saved*." —*Jer.* xxxiii. 15. And "I will *betroth thee* "*unto me* for ever * * *in judgement* and in "mercy."—*Hos.* ii. 19. See, too, *Ps.* lxxxii. 8, *Ezech.* xxxiv. 16, &c.

From the New Testament I have already given some quotations, but ample proof remains worthy of our closest study, and shewing the true meaning of judgement, alike here and hereafter, as *conveying salvation*. Take for instance the context, so often overlooked, of our Lord's famous words, *S. John* xii. 32—"Now is the "*judgement* of this world, now shall the prince "of this world be cast out. And I, if I be "lifted up will draw all men unto me." The judgement of the world is the salvation of the world, is the drawing of all men to CHRIST. No less striking are the words of S. PAUL, which refer to the last judgement, and shew conclusively that, that Great Day brings salvation to all who are judged. Turn to *Rom.* xiv. 10— "We must all stand before the judgement seat "of CHRIST," must each render his account to

GOD. But that is far from being the only object of that judgement. Its main and essential purpose is *salvation.* To shew this is easy. For note, that to illustrate the purpose of GOD in judging, S. PAUL here quotes from *Is.* xlv. 23, which runs thus—"Look unto me and be ye "*saved, all ye ends of the earth,* for I am GOD, "* * I have sworn by myself that unto me "every knee shall bow. * * The word is "gone out, and shall not return;" it *must* be fulfilled, *i.e.*, GOD's purpose of salvation must reach effectually the entire race (see p. 127). But this prophetic assertion of a *universal* salvation is here quoted by the Apostle, and is *linked with the Day of Judgement, which according to him, it describes.* In that Judgement S. PAUL sees not the final damnation of any man, but the fulfilment of the prophetic promise—a pledge that salvation shall reach every soul of man. Do pause, and realise the full significance of this! Beyond the grave, after death, and its changes, we have S. PAUL looking on to the closing scene; to that Judgement which winds up the great Drama of life, and sin, and redemption. And as the Apostle looks he sees a picture bright with hope for every human soul—a picture which he can only describe in terms of the joyful outburst of the Prophet, "Look unto me and *be ye saved* "*all ye ends of the earth.*"

Bearing all this in mind, a light, clear and

distinct, falls on those words of S. PAUL (so unintelligible on the ordinary view), where he declares the gospel to be "the power of GOD "unto salvation, * * for therein is the "wrath of GOD revealed." Note salvation and wrath linked together, *salvation because the wrath* of GOD is revealed against all sin. S. PETER'S teaching on this point has been already referred to (pp. 207-8). Let us next take an interesting passage from S. JOHN, "I saw "another angel, having the everlasting gospel to "proclaim to all them that dwell on the earth, "and he said, fear GOD and give HIM glory, for "the hour of HIS judgement is come."—*Rev.* xvi. 14. Note the *everlasting gospel* proclaimed —how? By *God's judgements.*

This view of GOD'S judgement is, be it noted, no modern fancy; it is precisely the teaching of antient Catholic Fathers, which I shall here give. Take in proof S. JEROME'S very striking comment on *Zeph.* iii. 8-10. There, speaking of the Day of Judgement and its terrors, he says, "The nations are gathered to the Judgement, "* * that on them may be poured out *all the* "*wrath of the fury of the Lord*, * * and this "* * in *pity*, and with a design *to heal*— "for the nations being assembled for judgement, "in order that wrath may be poured out on "them, not in part but in whole, *both wrath and* "*fury being united*; then, whatever is earthy is

"consumed in the whole world * * in order "that *every one may return* to the confession of "the Lord, that in JESUS' name every knee may "bow, and every tongue may confess that HE is "Lord." Need I point out the extreme significance of these words? They are unhesitating in their frank recognition of, nay, in the emphasis laid on '*the wrath of the fury of the Lord*,' '*the* '*whole mass both of wrath and fury*,' at the Great Day of Judgement. But this 'wrath of fury' is but a proof of love, a means of salvation! The Great Day of Wrath that *is to burn like fire*, and to *consume* the adversaries of GOD, burns up only what is earthy, bringing to every sinner salvation! Again we have S. JEROME commenting on *Rom.* i. 18. 'Therein is the Wrath of GOD 'revealed against all ungodliness,' "where wrath "is revealed it is *not* inflicted; it does not smite, "but it is revealed in order that it may terrify, "and may not be inflicted on the terrified."—*In Hab.* iii.

So deeply important, and so unfamiliar to the great majority, is this aspect of Patristic teaching, that I feel it right to continue these quotations in proof of GOD'S judgement, as implying to *all* men salvation. I give next the substance of an interesting passage on the final judgement from the same Father. Writing on *Micah* vii. 17, he compares the wicked to serpents, who, as they creep over the earth, drag along with them

earthly matter. So the wicked, who bring with them a mass of earthly sinful matter to GOD's judgement (the original is very emphatic in dwelling on the mass of sin), 'shall be 'troubled *so long as the sinful matter clings to* '*them.*' But when (by the judgement) this has been cleared away, they too shall end by fearing GOD. On verse 18, S. JEROME continues his comment thus: "GOD pours out HIS wrath in "order that HE may shew mercy." Next, I quote the following: "I shall judge thee in order that in "this (judgement) I may shew forth my mercy, "like a physician, who does not spare, in order "that he may spare."—In *Ezech.* xxiv. Again, commenting on *Nahum* i. 8, this Father says, "If you think HIM cruel who destroyed the human race, who rained fire on Sodom "and Gomorrha, learn that HE punished them "in order that *He might not punish them* "*eternally.*" I close these citations from S. JEROME with the following suggestive comment of his on *Ps.* clx.: "Magna est ira Dei *quando non nobis irascatur.*"—See for similar language of this Father, pp. 97 and 119.

Equally forcible and clear is the teaching of S. GREGORY of Nyssa.—See p. 119. "Therefore "the Divine judgement does not, as its chief "object, cause pain to those who have sinned, "but *works good alone* by separating from evil, "and drawing to a share in blessedness. But

"this severance of good from evil causes the pain "(of the judgement)." In other words the penalty is the cure ; it is merely the unavoidable pain attending the removal of the intruding element of sin.—*De an. et resur.* And again, "If this (sin) be not cured here, its cure is postponed "to a future life. As sharp *remedies* for obstinate "cases, so GOD announces HIS future judgement "*for the cure* of the diseases of the soul, and "*(note these words)* "that judgement uses threats "to the lazy and vain * * in order that "through fear we may be trained to avoiding "evil ; *but by those who are more intelligent, it* "(the judgement) *is believed to be a medicine,** "a *cure* from GOD, who is bringing the creature, "which he has formed, back to that state of "grace which first existed."—*Cat. orat.* viii.

I leave these words without further comment to the thoughtful reader, who will readily see all they imply. It will be interesting to compare with them the following from DIDYMUS : "For "although the judge at times inflicts tortures "and anguish on those who merit them, yet he "who *more deeply scans* the reasons of things, "perceiving the purpose of HIS goodness, who

* S. GREGORY does not mean to deny the terror of the Judgement Day. Hear his words. "*All creation trembles*, who is without "fear? Not even the angels, though they have no account to "render, yet the glorious presence (of GOD) causes fear to all."—*In verba fac. hom. orat.* ii.

"desires to amend the sinner, confesses HIM to "be good. He who is our Lord and Saviour "inflicts on us everything that may lead us to "salvation: inflicting on us according to HIS "mercy, yet doing this in HIS judgement."—*De Sp. San. lib.* ii. Again writing on the 57th *Psalm*, S. GREGORY says that the wrath of GOD, which is to swallow up the sinful, is not wrath at all. "In the case of GOD, HIS wrath, though "to sinners it seems wrath, and is so called by "them, is nothing less than wrath (*i.e.*, *is not "wrath at all*), but as a *quasi-wrath* comes to "those who, according to GOD's justice, call it a "retribution, but *God Himself is not really angry.*" ORIGEN goes quite as far as S. GREGORY or S. JEROME. "When thou hearest of the wrath of "GOD, believe not that this wrath is a passion of "GOD. It is a condescension of language, "designed to convert and improve the child. * * "So GOD is described to us as angry, in order to "our conversion and improvement, when in "truth HE is not angry."—*Ed. Huet. f.* 378.

Next, a few words must be added as to the true place 'fire' holds in the teaching of the New Testament. It, like judgement, so far from being the sinner's portion only, is the portion of *all*. Like GOD's judgement, again it is not future merely, but present; it is as the New Testament says, '*already kindled*,' *i.e.*, always

kindled: its object is not torment but cleansing. The proof is easy and unanswerable, coming from the lips of our LORD Himself. He it is who says, "I am come *to send fire on the earth*," words that in fact convey all I am seeking to teach, for it is certain that HE came as a SAVIOUR. Thus coming *to save*, CHRIST comes *with fire*, nay with fire already kindled. HE comes to baptise with the Holy Ghost, and *with fire*. Therefore, it is that CHRIST teaches in a solemn passage (usually misunderstood, *S. Mark* ix. 43) that *every one* shall be salted with fire. And so the "fire is to try *every man's* work." He whose work fails is saved (mark the word *saved*), *not damned* 'so as by fire,' for GOD'S fire, by consuming what is evil, saves and refines the suffering sinner. The same truth we find in the Old Testament. The Prophet ISAIAH tells us of GOD'S cleansing the daughters of Zion by the spirit of judgement, and the spirit of burning (ch. iv. 4) suggestive words. And again, 'By *fire* will the Lord plead with *all* flesh.'—*Is.* lxvi. 16. And so MALACHI describes CHRIST as being in HIS saving work 'Like a refiner's fire' (ch. iii. 3). One other passage I take from the Old Testament because it is echoed in the New, and shows the merciful character of the Divine fire: we find GOD described thus—"Thy GOD is a *consuming fire*," and a few verses further on, "Thy GOD is a *merciful God*," *Deut.* iv. 24-31; most apt and significant this juxta-position! And so in *Heb.*

we have "*Our* GOD is a consuming fire," *i.e.*, GOD in HIS closest relation to us: GOD is love, GOD is spirit, but '*Our* GOD is a consuming fire!'—a consuming fire, says S. GREGORY, "by "which the *whole material substance of sin is* "destroyed," *i.e.*, by which *not* the sinner but the sin is consumed.—*Cont. Eunom. orat.* i.v.

So far from seeking to explain away the solemn warnings of the Gospel, the larger hope in fact presses them home. It warns *everyone* that the way to life lies through the 'fires,' that the cross must either be taken up here and now, or else if sin be indulged in, that there awaits the sinner hereafter a far more terrible ordeal—a keener 'fire' that shall search him through and through. We, then, who teach hope for all men, do not shrink from, but accept, *in their fullest meaning*, those mysterious 'fires' of Gehenna, of which CHRIST speaks (kindled for purification), as in a special sense the sinner's doom in the coming ages. If, as the Bible plainly teaches, *all* must pass through 'the fires,' then for the sinner doubtless a far sharper fire must be kindled hereafter. But taught by the clearest statements of Scripture (confirmed as they are by all the analogies of nature), we see in these 'fires' not a denial of, but a mode of fulfilling the assured promise—"Behold, I *make all things new*." They in fact are but mistaking the whole significance of fire in its Scriptural usage, who

regard it as implying merely torment. Alike nature and Scripture teach a far different lesson as to the uses of 'fire.' Its mission is to *bless* and to *purify*. It sustains life and cherishes it. Nay, it is the very condition of life. Take away the fires stored in the world, and you take life away. No doubt it has a mission of destruction, but even then its agency is in the end to promote and call forth fresh life and growth.

Had these facts been borne in mind, how much painful controversy would have been spared: how many sad hearts would have escaped needless pangs, if they had but remembered or been taught, the *beneficent* action of fire. For again and again recalling this fact, and trying to impress it on the minds of men no apology is needed. Few more necessary offices can be undertaken by those who treat of this subject, than to assert the life-giving, the cleansing, the purifying agency of fire, in opposition to that untrue and gloomy view that looks on it as an agent of mere torment. "'Fire,' in Scripture, is "the element of 'life' (*Is.* iv. 5), of 'purifica-"tion' (*Matt.* iii. 3), of 'atonement' (*Lev.* xvi. "27), of 'transformation' (2 *Peter*, iii. 10), and "at the worst only of 'total destruction' (*Rev.* "xx. 9), *never of* 'preservation alive' for "purposes of anguish." And the popular view selects precisely this latter use, never found in Scripture, and represents it as the *sole* end of

GOD'S fiery judgments! Need I say more? By such means as this has the traditional creed been built up; on arguments so unsound, so partial does it rest: arguments whose weakness is brought into clear relief by the very Scriptures to which it appeals, even without considering the abundant evidence, furnished by nature, of the *beneficent* agency of fire.

Abundant quotations might be made from the Fathers in support of the above view of fire. Let St. AMBROSE speak. Writing on *Ps.* cxviii, "All," he says, "must be proved by fire, as many "as desire to return to Paradise. For, not idly "has it been written, that when ADAM and EVE "were driven forth from Paradise, GOD placed "at the gate thereof a flaming sword which "turned every way. *All* then must pass "through these fires; whether it be that JOHN "the Evangelist, whom the LORD so loved, or "that PETER who received the keys of the King-"dom of Heaven."—*Serm.* xx, 12. To the same effect speak other Fathers. S. HILARY writes, "They that are baptised with the Holy Ghost are "yet to be perfected by the fire of judgement." From ORIGEN, I take the following: As bodily diseases require some nauseous drug, or it may be the amputating knife, or if this fail, actual cautery, "how much more is it to be understood "that GOD, our Physician * * should employ, "for healing, penal measures, and even the

"punishment of fire. * * The *fury of God's* "*vengeance* is profitable for the purgation of "souls. That the punishment, which is said to "be applied by fire, is *applied with the object of* "*healing*, is taught by *Isaiah* iv. 4." S. JEROME, as usual, has much that is interesting on this subject of fire. Writing on AMOS iv., he says "Fire is GOD's *last medicine* for the ten "tribes, and for heretics, and for *all sinners*," that after GOD has tried death and destruction and they have not even then repented, "he may "overthrow them as HE did Sodom and "Gomorrah; that when overthrown, and when "the Divine fire shall have burned up all that is "vilest in them, *they themselves shall be delivered* "as a brand snatched from the burning." The following is of interest as bearing both on 'judgement' and on 'fire.' "For penalties are "inflicted on those who are ailing to this end "that a *cure* may come after the pain. There- "fore (*i.e.*, to effect a cure) the world which "'*lieth in wickedness*' is burned with Divine fire "in the day of judgement, and the bloody city is laid upon coals of fire."†—*In Ezech.* xxi. I must also add a pithy utterance of the same Father. Speaking of GOD, he says, "HE is *fire* "that HE may expel the Devil's cold."—From S.

† See *Is.* lxvii. 14-5, quoted by ORIGEN and S. JEROME, where the Septuagint has a remarkable reading—"Thou hast coals of fire, sit upon them, they will be to thee a help."

JEROME'S comment on *Hab.* ii. I take the following—"Illis quippe *in igne* deficientibus "* * aut *diaboli principis sui igne consumptis*, "aut certe succensis igne Domini de quo ait "'Ignem veni mettere super terram' et de "priori cursu retractis et agentibus penitentiam, "replebitur *universa* terra Gloria Domini." I shall only say further that S. JEROME'S commentaries are full of this teaching, see, *e.g.*, his remarks on *Mal.* iii. 2-3, *Hos.* iv. 14, xi. 8-9, *Joel* ii. 4, *Amos* vii. 4, &c., &c. Thus on *Nahum* iii. 13, he speaks of GOD'S wrath as "*cleansing* by means of the fire of Hell "(Gehenna)." Again commenting on *Obad.* i. 18, S. JEROME says, "This flame shall devour "ESAU for his salvation, * * so that ESAU "shall be no more (*i.e.*, as ESAU, as evil) at that "Day when every knee shall bow to CHRIST in "order that GOD may be all in all." I add the following, though it refers rather to 'death' than to 'fire.' S. JEROME comments thus on *Hab.* iii, "'In the end of the world every created thing "(omnis creatura) shall be set free' (from evil). "* * * GOD'S arrows are sent forth not to "slay but to enlighten. * * * (Spiritual) "death was sent to the wicked in order that "they who before used to live to sin, being dead "to sin, might live to GOD. * * CHRIST smites "the prince of this world and his abode, *i.e.*, "the world and *every sinful soul.* And HE "smites for this end in order that the evil being

"cast out, it may become the abode of GOD. "And it is worthy so to think of GOD, who went "forth with HIS CHRIST * * in order that He "might become our head, who is the head of every "man and of HIS Church." Again in a striking passage, the same Father speaks of the lapsed, and lost Christian soul, as begging GOD to "*burn* its fleshly parts and open its wounds * * "that it may suffer so many torments, and after- "wards receive a cure. * * Finally, after "tortures and punishments the *soul brought forth* "*from the outer darkness, and having paid the* "*very last farthing*, says, I shall behold his "righteousness. * * Now he who after GOD'S "wrath, says that he sees GOD'S righteousness "(justification) promises himself the sight of "CHRIST.—*In Micah* vii.

To the same effect much might be quoted from S. GREGORY, of Nyssa. "The evil man will not "become a sharer in the divine nature, till the "cleansing fire shall have removed the stains "mingled with the soul."—*Orat de mort.* Elsewhere he says that water and fire have a cleansing effect. "They who have not shared "the mystical cleansing of water, must be "cleansed by fire."—*Cat. orat.* XXXV. In the same spirit he writes, that as GOD'S purpose to cleanse from sin the human race, cannot fail, so those who are not healed in the present "shall "be hereafter cleansed at fitting times by fire."

—*De an. et resurr.* And again, "In the same "mode, the soul which is united to sin must be "set in the fire, *till* that which is unnatural and "vile * * be removed, consumed by the *eternal* "*fire.*"—*Ib.* Here note, S. GREGORY distinctly teaches that the *eternal (aionios) fire is temporary and purgatorial.*† "This fire," he goes on to say, "shall be kindled for a longer or a shorter period, "in proportion to the amount of sin needing to "be cleansed away."

There remains for our consideration a very important class of passages, supposed, but, as I shall hope to show, erroneously, to favour the popular creed. These passages—to which I would now briefly advert—are those that speak of the 'elect,' and their fewness (see p. 6), of the 'many' called, but the 'few' chosen. That GOD'S election is a doctrine clearly revealed in Scripture, none can doubt: although, unfortunately, around few subjects has the battle of controversy been so furiously waged. One great party has, in affirming GOD'S election—which is true—so affirmed it as to make HIM into an arbitrary and cruel tyrant—which is false. But the truer and deeper views of GOD'S plan of mercy through JESUS CHRIST—now in the ascendant I trust—teaches us to affirm distinctly the doctrine of the Divine election of 'the few,'

† It is interesting to note that the Latin version of S. GREGORY, though usually very fair, in this instance *omits to translate the weighty and significant aionios of the original.*

and just because we so affirm it, to connect with it purposes of *universal* mercy. For what is the true end and meaning of GOD'S election when rightly understood? The elect, we reply, are chosen, not for themselves only, but for other's sake. They are 'elect,' not merely to be blessed, but to be a source of blessing. GOD'S choice of 'the few' is not designed to terminate with them. It is not merely with the paltry object of saving a few, while the vast majority perish, that GOD elects; it is with a Divine purpose, a purpose of mercy to all; it is by 'the few' to save 'the 'many,' by the elect to save the world. "If you "go to Scripture," says Dr. Cox, "you will find "this its constant teaching. Even in those early "days when one man, one family, one nation, "were successively chosen, to be the depositories "of Divine truth, when, therefore, if ever we "might expect to find the redemptive purpose "of GOD disclosed within narrow and local "limitations; when unquestionably it was much "fettered and restrained by personal promises, "and by national and temporary institutions; the "Divine purpose is for ever oversteping every "limit, every transient localisation and restraint, "and claiming, as its proper sphere, all the souls "that are and shall be." This admits of easy proof. Take a typical case to show what GOD'S election really means. Take the case of ABRAHAM, the father and founder of GOD'S elect people. What was the promise to him? 'That

in his seed should *all the families of the earth* be 'blessed.' This was of the essence of GOD'S election. And to this effect S. PAUL speaks with perfect clearness. The promise to ABRAHAM was, he tells us, that he should be the heir of the *world*, *Rom.* iv. 13; words most expressive, and yet without meaning, on the common view of election. In other words the Jews, as GOD'S people, have, as their inheritance, all lands, all peoples. In the same Epistle (to the Romans) S. PAUL points out how close the connection is between Israel and the world (p.p. 149-50). Three times over he asserts their very fall to be the riches of the world, and asks if so, what will not the reconciling of Israel be (to the world). In short, on GOD'S elect people hangs the lot and destiny of mankind—see *Gal.* iii. 8, and *Acts* iii. 21-5; the latter passage is very interesting, for S. PETER there asserts the connection between a *universal* restoration, and the promise to ABRAHAM, *i.e.*, his election. These topics have been already touched on in earlier chapters, but without again referring to them here, I could not have given any clear view of the Divine election —as a fact undoubtedly taught in Scripture, and yet implying a purpose of mercy to all. A further admirable illustration of this may be given (furnished by Holy Scripture) from its teaching as to the 'first fruits,' and as to the 'first born.' Israel, as GOD'S elect, is the 'first 'fruits'—Israel the 'first born.' But the 'first

'fruits' imply and pledge the *whole* harvest; the 'first born' involve and include in the Divine economy the *whole* family (as indeed has been said in a former chapter). "The first born and "first fruits are the 'few' and the 'little flock;' "but these, although 'first delivered from the "curse,' have *relation to the whole creation*, which "shall be saved in the appointed times by the "first born seed, that is by CHRIST and HIS "body." It is thus clear that we, so far from denying or weakening the election of the *few*, lay stress on it. Rightly viewed, GOD'S electing grace stands, not opposed to, but in complete agreement with the widest hope for all men. It becomes indeed a corner stone, so to speak, in the edifice of the world's salvation; for HIS 'elect' few are the very means by which our Father designs to bless all HIS children — designs to work out HIS plan of universal salvation.

A few closing remarks are needed here, to indicate the principle that is really at stake, in the questions this chapter discusses. For that principle is vital, and fundamental. It is no less than the unity of the Godhead; no less than the first article of the Creed, 'I believe in *one* GOD the Father Almighty'—in GOD who is *one*, not in nature alone, but in purpose and in will—one and unchanging. But in place of this GOD, the popular creed presents us with a Being who fluctuates between tenderness and wrath; one

who has ever-changing plans, and a will that is divided, and baffled. For half His creatures, His love is in fact momentary, and His vengeance eternal. For the other half, His pity is eternal, and His wrath transient. This God is not even Lord in His own house; for the worst and feeblest of His creatures can defeat His most cherished plan; can paralyze the Cross of Christ. In such a God I can see no trace of Him, who is Almighty and unchanging, whose property is *always* to have mercy; whose love, though it must take the form of vengeance against sin, never ceases to pursue the sinner, for "love never "faileth;" *never* to all eternity. Against the popular caricature of God, this chapter is thus a special protest—that caricature which represents eternal love as turning to hate, as soon as the sinner dies; which vainly talks of an Eternal Father, whose judgements mean salvation in one world, and change to damnation in the next: of eternal love, whose fire purifies and refines in time, and then beyond the grave turns to mere (purposeless) torture. All this is not alone morally repulsive, but is a plain contradiction in terms.

Against this mass of contradiction stands the view I have been advocating of 'death,' 'judge-' ment,' 'fire,' 'election.' It rests on a principle simple and, I believe, quite irrefragible. It rests, as I have said, ultimately on the Divine *unity*—

unity of essence, and unity of design. As GOD is one and immutable, so is HIS purpose of salvation one, immutable, and unfailing, "Propositum "atque consilium ejus (Dei) hoc *unum* est," † says S. GREGORY. GOD's essential unity is destroyed when we assign to HIM conflicting actions; when, *e.g.*, we represent HIS 'fire,' 'wrath,' or judgements as differing in purpose, or in result from HIS love; or fancy that if HIS judgements now mean salvation, they at the Great Day mean damnation. GOD, I repeat, in HIS 'judgements,' in HIS 'fires,' in 'death,' in 'election;' GOD in time and in eternity is one and the *same* GOD (*Heb.* xiii. 8), and has, and must have to all eternity, but one unchanging purpose—is and must be for ever GOD our Saviour. Those who are not moved by any words of mine may perhaps lay to heart the words of one of the most eminent Fathers. To sever GOD's action into love and harshness is, says S. GREGORY, but madness, *nay the 'madness of idle babblers!'* At the bare idea that GOD can be really hard or cruel to HIS enemies (see note on *S. Luke* vi. 27, p. 134) and loving to HIS friends, the Saint exclaims with a scorn (most rare in his writings)—"Oh, the "madness of these babblers! for if GOD is un- "merciful to HIS foes, HE will not be truly kind "even to thee HIS friend."—*De orat.* 1.

† I quote the Latin version, which will be generally intelligible.

CHAPTER X.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

"The little Pilgrim listened with an intent face, clasping her "hands and said, 'But it never could be that our Father should be "overcome by evil. Is that not known in all the worlds?'"—*The Little Pilgrim*, p. 122.

"This world is strange and often terrible; but be not afraid, all "will come right at last. Rest will conquer Restlessness; Faith will "conquer Fear; Order will conquer Disorder; Health will conquer "Sickness; Joy will conquer Sorrow; Pleasure will conquer Pain; "Life will conquer Death; Right will conquer Wrong. *All will be "well at last.*"—*Madam How and Lady Why*—C. KINGSLEY.

I shall commence this closing chapter by pointing out that the question of universalism is usually argued on a basis altogether misleading. It is commonly stated as though the point involved was chiefly or wholly man's endless suffering. Awful and repulsive to every moral instinct as is that view of human destiny, it is not the real turning point of this controversy. The vital question is this, that the popular creed teaches an eternity of evil, points to a victorious Devil, and to sin as finally triumphant over GOD. Of all this I have spoken, but in this retrospect let me again most earnestly press this as the vital point, that our choice lies between accepting the victory of CHRIST or of the evil one, and *between*

those alternatives only. Escape from this dilemma there is none. It avails nothing to diminish, as so many now teach, the number of the lost; or to assert as others do, that they will be finally annihilated. It cannot be too clearly pointed out, that all such modifications leave absolutely *untouched*, the great central difficulty of the popular creed—the triumph of evil. Sin eternally present with its taint, were it but in a *single* instance, is sin triumphant. Sin, which GOD has been unable to remove (and has had no resource but to annihilate the sinner) is sin triumphant, and death (emphatically) victorious. On these lines, and these only, let this controversy proceed, and the issue can no longer be doubtful. Are we to abandon the Cross as a failure, to teach that the Atonement designed to save all, has in fact, missed its end? Here lies the fundamental issue; is GOD really Almighty as well as All-good; or is evil lodged in our perverted will too strong for HIM and HIS CHRIST? Or take the Incarnation, has the second ADAM done less of good for man, than the first has of evil? Is the Bible mocking us in saying that "as in ADAM *all* die, so in "CHRIST shall *all* be made alive?" To say this is to deny the central truth of the Incarnation, which is the taking of the race *as a whole* into union with GOD, exactly as the fall embraced the race as a whole. Thus, the ordinary creed and all its various *modifications*, now so popular,

virtually subvert the Atonement; and reject the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for an Atonement that has missed its end is not the Atonement of the Bible—an Incarnation that fails in fact to embrace the human race, as an organic undivided whole, is not the Incarnation of JESUS CHRIST as the second ADAM.

Too often, again, is the Scriptural argument for the larger hope stated as though it were weak. No greater mistake can be made. Those who have reason to shrink from an appeal to the Scriptures are not universalists, but are the advocates of endless sin! of a baffled Saviour! of a victorious Devil! It is they who shut their eyes to the teaching of the Bible. It is they who make light of its repeated promises of a restitution of all things through CHRIST. It is they who make GOD'S word of none effect by their traditions. The notion, which is in fact that of the popular creed, viz., that GOD is in the Bible detailing the story of HIS own defeat—is telling how sin has proved too strong for HIM; this notion is worse than absurd. No! assuredly the Bible is not the story of sin, deepening into eternal ruin—of creation, darkened for ever by a ghastly Hell—of GOD'S own SON, worsted in HIS utmost effort; it is from the opening to the close the story of grace stronger than sin—of life victorious over every form of death—of GOD triumphing over evil.

And next let me once more (see p. 20) repeat that the larger hope emphatically and fully accepts the doctrine of retribution awaiting unrepented sin hereafter. Its advocates believe in a retribution stern and unflinching, and prolonged till the stubborn will yields to the stronger will of GOD and HIS CHRIST; till HE who has been lifted up on the Cross shall have drawn to HIMSELF all men, as HE so plainly promises. Those who picture universalism as some easy-going system, which refuses to face the stern facts of sin and misery and retribution, are absolutely and hopelessly wrong. We press on all the awful certainty of a wrath to come. Nay, we can urge this with infinitely more chance of acceptance, because we teach retribution in a form that does not wound the conscience; because we dare not teach that finite sin shall receive an infinite penalty; or that evil in any form is too strong for the Cross of CHRIST to overcome.

And as the larger hope leads us to affirm, and emphasise the teaching of Scripture as to the guilt of actual sin and its certain punishment, so it teaches us to give prominence to the fact of original sin. For in this it sees a clear proof of a fundamental doctrine of Scripture, the organic unity of our race—a doctrine lying at the root of the Fall and the Incarnation. Each infant born into a state of sin is a witness to its truth, and

bears in its whole life sad proof of the organic unity of our race, in the taint drawn from our first parent ADAM. But this unity is to be traced, not alone in the tie connecting us with the first ADAM, but as truly in the bond which unites us with the second ADAM. In words admitted—this is in fact denied by the popular creed—but once admitted as a vital fact, it follows necessarily that CHRIST's relation is not to men singly, but to man, *i.e.*, mankind. Therefore, the salvation which HE brings is not (cannot be) a thing of individuals, but of all. Therefore, a partial salvation is not possible, for CHRIST redeems, not individual men, but mankind; not human beings severally, but humanity. CHRIST has nothing to do with a part of our race. As the second ADAM, HE sums up in HIMSELF and saves the human race, "For as in ADAM all die, "so in (the second) ADAM shall all be made "alive." CHRIST, I repeat, in HIS Incarnation deals not with the units of our race, *but with the race itself as the unit.* On the popular view it is impossible to conceive how the Incarnation can be really maintained or really believed, for that view stands in a position of hopeless contradiction to CHRIST as the second ADAM. Hence the popular creed deals a fatal blow at the Incarnation.

Few things, I repeat, have so hindered the spread of the larger hope, as the groundless notion, that

it implies an inadequate sense of sin, and pictures GOD as a weakly indulgent Being, careless of holiness, provided the happiness of HIS creatures is secured. But in fact it is those who teach the popular creed, and not we, who make light of sin. I press once more this point. To teach unending sin in Hell, were it only in a solitary instance, and under any conceivable modification or mitigation, is to teach at once the victory of evil, and the toleration of sin by GOD? To us this seems at once a blasphemy and a folly—a blasphemy because it imputes to GOD acquiescence in sin, which HE can destroy if HE will; a folly because it teaches that HIS omnipotence breaks down at the very moment it is most needed. And here we may perhaps ask, can any light, however small, be thrown on this awful mystery of sin? For all *practical* purposes, I reply there are but two possible views of moral evil. It is eternal, destined to endure as long as GOD HIMSELF, which is in fact Dualism; * or it is temporary and finite, not rooted in the essential constitution of nature, but in GOD's mysterious plan permitted only to serve a higher end. † On

* May it not be said a peculiarly evil form of Dualism, for in it the good Spirit knowingly and freely permits of HIS own will the entrance of evil, which HE knows will endure eternally?

† It deserves notice that this view of moral evil is substantially that of THOMAS AQUINAS; "he makes the elevation of the creature "above the original capabilities of his nature, to depend on the "introduction of sin.—*Neander* viii. 216.

this view it is a stage in the development of the creature, and of this there seems a *hint* conveyed in the story of the first sin. By it man is said to have 'become as one of us,' as though the very Fall implied a Rise. And what but this idea can adequately express the meaning of that most memorable passage, "*God hath shut up all men unto* "*disobedience, in order that he might have mercy* "*upon all*?" Note here the stress boldly laid (i.)on *God's agency* and *not* on *man's will.* (ii.) The universality alike of sin and of salvation, both are equally absolute, effectual, universal. (iii.) Sin is permitted *only* as leading up to as involving salvation. And in conformity with this view we see not an arrangement by which man starts innocent in the race of life, free to choose sin or not, but an express provision for the hereditary transmission of evil; by which innocence is *rendered impossible* to every human being; by which every child of ADAM is, in the Divine plan, '*shut up unto (sin) disobedience,*' an arrangement wholly inconceivable on the part of a good and loving Father, except with a settled purpose of mercy to every one.

Further, if it be asked whether the evil effects of wilful sin ever wholly pass away, it may be replied, probably never in some cases. Certainly some 'enter into life halt and maimed.' Obstinate persistency in sin may leave on the spirit a wound whose evil effects are permanent. Two

results of this fact deserve notice. i. It answers the plausible taunt cast at the larger hope as leading the careless to say, "if this be true I will "have my fling, for all will come 'right at last.'" Is this so? Yes, in one sense. *No*, in another. Yes, because such men do 'enter into life' though after long years (or ages) of penalty and darkness. No, because they enter halt and maimed spiritually. ii. May not this furnish a meeting place for reasonable men on both sides? For final and universal restoration is not opposed to perpetual penalty in a certain sense; because the wilful sinner, though saved, may yet suffer a perpetual loss, *a pœna damni*, loss of the highest spiritual blessedness hereafter.

Again of the selfishness that blackens the ordinary creed I have already spoken. So often is this overlooked that I press the point here. What shall we say of a system whose very heaven is degradation, whose idea of blessedness is moral baseness or moral torpor? For what does the ordinary view in fact teach? it bids us look forward to a heaven from which our friends, our neighbours, our wives, our brothers, our sisters, are (very many of them) excluded for ever, shut up in agony while we enjoy the delights of Paradise; we exult, but they agonise; we are in bliss, they are in torment, while we either know not, or knowing, care not for their woe. If this be not selfishness at its height, what is selfishness?

If it be not baseness, what is baseness? It is to make the blessed in Heaven more degraded morally than DIVES in his torment. To this difficulty, *no answer has ever been given* by the popular creed, except one which makes the difficulty far, far worse (p. 42), viz., that the blessed delight in contemplating the torments of the lost. But no answer is in fact possible.

A few words I must add on the disregard for truth that taints the ordinary creed. I do not mean wilful untruth, but I do mean that virtual falsehood stains almost the whole body of our religious literature; alike in its gravest and most elaborate treatises, as in its lighter forms. Falsehood is to say one thing, while meaning another. Hence, to assert that the world is saved, while meaning that in fact half the world will be damned; to teach the victory of CHRIST, while meaning in fact the victory of the Devil: to do this in a thousand forms, in hymns (see p.p. 63-5), in sermons, tracts, treatises, is virtual falsehood; and with such falsehood, our religious literature is, I repeat, *literally honey-combed through and through.* In GOD'S name, I say let this system of equivocation come to an end. Let us cease these virtual untruths, however true it may be, that long habit has blinded us to their real nature; cease to speak of CHRIST as saving the world, unless we believe that in fact the world will be saved; cease to

talk of the destruction of sin and death, while we really mean that both will, in fact, go on for ever in Hell. Let us no more palter with truth in this awful matter; CHRIST is victor, or HE is not. He has put away death and sin and pain in fact, or he has not. If HE has only *tried to save* the world and failed utterly, let us, as honest men, say so—as honest men, proclaim as our creed the victory of Satan.

But so long as the popular creed and the Bible are held together, so long must this system of untruth continue. We pray to 'our Father,' to whom in the next breath we assign acts towards HIS own children, more cruel than any the most debased earthly parent ever dreamed of. What is this but to degrade the Godhead below, far below, the level of our humanity? What is left for us to worship if the truth be a lie—if love essential be cruelty itself—if GOD be that which I dare not write? But there is more to be said. Having thus degraded to the very uttermost the idea of GOD, the popular creed goes on to assure us of HIS tenderness that *never* wearies—HIS love that *never* fails. What cruel mockery is this, coming, as it does, from those who really mean, that this unfailing eternal love watches to all eternity, unmoved and unsympathising the never-ending agonies of HIS own children. Few things, indeed, illustrate more completely the collapse of the popular creed than the apologies offered for

it. Take an instance. A favourite plea with many is to avoid a direct defence, but to take shelter under the phrase, 'GOD will do HIS best 'for every man'—(p. 19). If this ambiguous phrase be offered as a defence for endless sin and torment, I can only suppose it meant not as an argument, but as a grim, and ill-timed piece of pleasantry. For what are the admitted facts? An Almighty Being, who is perfectly free to create or to abstain from creating, forces on myriads of hapless children of HIS own the fatal gift of existence, knowing that in fact this life of theirs will ripen into endless misery and woe. To call this doing HIS *best* for them is an abuse of language, if it be not what I have ventured to call a cruel and ill-timed pleasantry.

These are but a few of the reasons which show how impossible it is to reconcile the belief in endless torment, with the plain and unmistakeable convictions of our moral nature—GOD'S highest gift to us. Few things are more wonderful in this whole question than the reluctance so many feel, to follow out these unhesitating convictions to their *only possible* legitimate conclusion—the rejection of that dogma, which so flatly contradicts them. It is not intended for a moment to assert, that these convictions are an absolutely infallible guide; for indeed of what can it be said, that its directions reach us in an infallible form? Can that be said of the Bible itself? Are those who

translate it infallible? Are those who comment on it infallible? Are those who read it free from error, from prejudice, from ignorance? But no one, therefore, doubts its Divine authority, or fails to see in it a guide practically sufficient, and binding on us. Exactly so in the case of that other, and primary, revelation of GOD to the heart and conscience of man. Although we do not claim infallibility for all its conclusions, yet we do claim that the deliberate verdict of our moral sense represents to us the voice of GOD practically. And therefore that which contradicts our deepest moral intuitions, convictions, instincts (call them what you please), *cannot be true.* Nay, by these very convictions, and by these alone, it is, that life is ordered, that society subsists, that religion itself becomes possible. Now this being so, we cannot dare, as the popular creed does, to attribute to our Creator acts, which we know and feel would be utterly cruel and horrible in an earthly parent. It is a blasphemy against our Maker so to do, it is doubly a blasphemy against HIM who is "our Father."

I say further, that the evil wrought by the ordinary creed is enormous. It has done, and is daily doing, more to spread and harden unbelief than all other causes put together. It enlists on the side of scepticism, the highest and best part of our nature, its moral forces. It has turned GOD into a fiend and a tyrant, cruel beyond imagination's wildest dreams of evil. It

has made of our dear Lord's Cross a bye-word and a mark for scorn: as attempting to save the world and recoiling defeated—the most awful failure known to history, or conceivable by thought. To a number so vast that I dare not attempt any computation, it has made life an agony and a curse. And whom has it benefited? Let me cite some remarkable words detailing 20 years' experience, as a Roman Catholic priest, and confessor to thousands. "The dogma of Hell, "except in the rarest cases, did no moral good. "It never affected the right persons. It tortured "innocent young women, and virtuous boys. It "appealed to the lowest motives, and the lowest "characters. *It never, except in the rarest "instances, deterred from the commission of sin.* "It caused unceasing mental and moral "difficulties. * * It always influenced the "wrong people, and in a wrong way. It caused "infidelity to some, temptations to others, and "misery without virtue to most."—*R. Suffield.* Nor is this all. I have pointed out how this creed hinders the spread of the Gospel abroad. As the missionary unfolds his tale of horrors, the very heathen shrink from the mockery of calling such a prospect any part of the tidings of great joy.

An important point has been discussed (p.p. 23-4), viz., the attempt made to remove the overwhelming moral difficulties attending the popular creed, by asserting that endless

torments are but the result of the human will freely choosing evil;* so that as the phrase is sometimes put, the doors of Hell are "locked on "the inside." I have shown how this assertion (i.) contradicts the plain teaching of Holy Scripture, (ii.) contradicts the very idea of Redemption, (iii.) denies GOD's freedom, (iv.) contradicts itself, and hence cannot be true. Thus the real difficulties are not *so much as touched* by any such theory. The intellectual difficulty remains the same, for the Almighty is thus defeated; the Scriptural difficulty remains the same, for its promises of universal restitution come to naught; and the moral difficulty is untouched, for the final victory remains with the powers of darkness on this view.

Of the Incarnation I have spoken, but I must add a few words on this special point, its influence on the whole chain of Christian dogma. *It is the great fact of Christianity.* From it flow, and on it depend the Atonement, the Sacramental system, the Resurrection; they are, as it were, results of the Incarnation, and extensions of it. Now the Incarnation involves the idea of the unity, absolute and indivisible, of

* It is worth noting that the Patristic teachers (*e.g.*, ORIGEN and CLEMENT) of the larger hope, are usually strong advocates of free will, and indeed, base their teaching in part, *on this very fact* (see also the extract from TITUS, of Bostra, p. 89, and one from S. GREGORY, of Nyssa, on p. 90-1).

the race of man.* "For what purpose is the "history of our race traced to its earliest origin * * "unless its fortunes were regarded *as a whole*, "and *it must stand or fall together?*"†—*Wilberforce on the Incarnation.* "To that old creation is "opposed the regeneration of man's race, through "its new creation in the second ADAM."—*Ib.* p. 538. "And so the seed of life, sown in the "Incarnation, interpenetrates the whole nature of "mankind."—*Ib.* 421. "CHRIST, the second ADAM, represents, not the individual, but the human race."—*Lightfoot, on Phil.* ii. 7. But this involves the salvation of the race, "which stands "or falls together." And hence it is that in the Atonement, all (*i.e.*, the race of man, our collective humanity) are said in Scripture, to die with JESUS CHRIST.—2 *Cor.* v. 14. And hence, again, HE *must*, as the Second ADAM, draw *all* men unto HIMSELF by HIS Cross. It is, to borrow a homely phrase, *all or none.* Thus, the Atonement involves the larger hope.

Let us pass to the Sacraments. They are an extension of the Incarnation. "The influence "of the Incarnation extends itself through that

* I do not stop to illustrate this by the facts of heredity, &c. It is enough to say that GOD'S idea or plan pre-supposes an indivisible unity of the race, and this involves universalism.

† These statements from the pen of one who teaches, that a part of the human race is severed for ever from the Second ADAM, are remarkable. They illustrate what has just been said (p. 240) of the virtual untruth which runs through our traditional theology.

"Sacramental system, which binds *all* men to the "head of the race."-- *Wilberforce*, p. 14. "As "there is a recapitulation of *all*, in Heaven and "earth in CHRIST, so there is a recapitulation of "all in CHRIST in the Holy Sacrament."—*Bishop Andrew's Sermon of the Nativity.* In the language of theology the tie formed in Baptism (renewed in Holy Communion) with CHRIST is so close, that in the famous words of S. LEO, "*Corpus reqenerati* "*fit caro Christi.*" "The body of the baptised "*becomes the flesh of Jesus Christ.*" But if so, it is impossible to believe that the very flesh of CHRIST can be sent into an endless Hell. Can JESUS CHRIST cut off, so to speak, HIS own flesh and sever it from HIMSELF for ever? or rather, to state the case fully, can CHRIST assign a portion of HIMSELF to the society of Devils for ever? Is this at all credible? It is of very great interest to note how one like KEBLE seems to feel this. When dwelling on these aspects of Redemption, the cruel theology to which he clings drops off; and rising to true catholicity, he bids us view "CHRIST's *least* and *worst with hope* "to meet above," and says in suggestive words "*Christ's mark outwears the rankest blot.*" Need I again (p. 81-2) point out how these words involve universalism, for our Lord always teaches that those who have been brought nearest to HIM and yet disobey, as do impenitent Christians, will fare worse in the final judgement than those who have never heard of HIM.

Lastly, let us pursue the Incarnation into another field of thought, and contemplate in its light the general Resurrection. "As in ADAM all die, so "in CHRIST shall all be made alive." Why is the obvious significance of these words lost sight of? To a universal death in ADAM is opposed a universal life in CHRIST, to a fall, a rising again, to a loss, a gain, and that universal and absolute. And so S. PAUL teaches as an object of *hope*, the resurrection of the unjust (p. 145), and his entire tone of thought in 1 *Cor.* XV., implies that the Resurrection is always, and to all, victory. Could he have thus written in a tone of exultation so absolutely unbroken, if the Resurrection were for any the prelude to, I will not say endless woe, but to endless sin? It is the undoing of death and all that death involves. It is the gift of life and immortality, and all that life involves. If the striking words of THEODORE, of Mopsuestia (p. 95), fail to impress any, let me point to THEOPHILUS, of Antioch (p. 84), to THEODORET (p. 95), to S. GREGORY (pp. 85,96, 145), as teaching emphatically this view of the Resurrection. Further, this Father says, "First of all we must "surely consider what is the meaning (scopos) of "the doctrine of the Resurrection.* * The Resur- "rection is the *restoration* of our nature to its "pristine state."—*De an. et Resurr.* "Therefore, "like a potter's vase, man is resolved once more "into clay, in order that (the defilements now "adhering to him being separated) he may *be*

"*moulded anew into his original form, by the* "*Resurrection.*"—*Cat orat.* c. viii. "Seeing that "our nature was originally formed as a vessel "capable of good, * * but good did not keep its "place, therefore, lest sin adhering to us should "last for ever, the vessel is, by a kindly providence, "dissolved for a time, in order that * * mankind "should be re-moulded and restored, free from the "admixture of sin, to its former state. For that "is the Resurrection, namely, the replacing of "our nature in its former state."—*In fun. Pulch. orat.*

From S. AMBROSE I take the following: "A "remedy (for the Fall) was discovered, namely, "that man should die and rise again. * * Now "in order that the grace of GOD might abide for "ever, Man died; but CHRIST brought in the "Resurrection in order that he might renew the "heavenly gift (of life). Death is an end of sin "(p. 93), and Resurrection is a *remoulding of* "*our nature.*"—*De Sacr.* ii. vi. S. HILARY speaks thus: "When the only begotten Son "was about to reconcile to GOD *all things* in "heaven, and on earth; * * when in HIM *all* "powers adverse to GOD were to be overcome; "when death * * should come to an end * * by "redeeming man from the law of sin—by making "GOD an object of praise to all, and through all "the eternities, by the gift and dignity of our "immortality. Now *all* these things the *virtue*

"*of the Resurrection accomplished.*"—*In Ps.* lxviii. THEODORET puts well the connection between the Resurrection of all and the Restoration of all. "S. PAUL asserting that 'the last enemy to be "destroyed is death,' and that 'HE hath put all "things under CHRIST'S feet,' adds finally '*in* "*order that God may be All in All.*' * * In the "present life GOD is in all, for HIS nature is with- "out limits * * But in the future, when (by the "Resurrection) mortality is at an end and "immortality granted, and (consequently) sin "has no longer any place, GOD will be All in "All."—*In Eph.* i. 23. "For CHRIST has "*wholly destroyed* the power of sin by HIS "promise of *immortality*; for it (sin) *cannot* "*trouble* immortal bodies."—*In Heb.* ix. 25. "For after the Resurrection, when our bodies "become incorruptible and immortal, grace shall "reign in them, *sin having no place left for it.* "For when sufferings (pathôn) are put an end "to (by the Resurrection), *sin will have no place.*" *In Rom.* v. 21. Viewed thus, surely a clearer light falls on the SAVIOUR'S words, "I am the "Resurrection and the Life," words which the Catholic creeds re-echo so suggestively, "I "believe in * * the Resurrection of the dead and "the Life everlasting"—the Resurrection as bring- ing to all life everlasting; the Life everlasting as linked with the Resurrection.

I come next to remark on the Patristic evidence

already quoted here, for the due understanding of which chapter iv. should be compared with chapter ix., sections on 'death,' 'judgement,' and 'fire.' Doubtless opinions will differ as to the weight due to the Fathers; but even viewed as a mere fact of history, the existence in the early centuries of a school so numerous, so orthodox and teaching so extreme a form of universalism, is in a high degree significant. This significance is only seen in its true light when we remember that universalism found its ablest advocates in those great Fathers whose native tongue was that of the New Testament; and bear in mind further what the position of the Church was, in fact, for the first three centuries. *(a.)* It was engaged in a struggle almost for life and death, and that with *(b.)* a heathenism—cruel, lustful, and abominable, beyond our present powers to conceive; *(c)* nor must we forget the doctrine of Economy or Reserve held by most of the Fathers. To find so many teaching *under these circumstances* the larger hope, promising openly a share—however remote or small—in future blessedness, to the blasphemer, the cruel persecutor, the votary of nameless lusts, though unrepentant in this life, is really wonderful. Such teaching must have seemed something like treason to the struggling Church, a blow aimed at the dearest interests of the Gospel. Such teaching can only be accounted for by the deepest and profoundest conviction that it was a vital truth—an essential

part of the Gospel. Let us, therefore, cease to wonder at occasional inconsistency—real or apparent—in the language of the Fathers who teach universalism. The truth is that the fact that any were found to teach it is irresistible proof, that it formed so vital a part of Christianity that they dared not teach otherwise. Further we have seen how the attempt to procure a condemnation of this belief in the case of ORIGEN signally failed, and how in fact no general council has ever condemned it, thus leaving it, so far as the Church is concerned, a perfectly open question. Nor have we omitted to remark how the two Ancient Creeds—the Apostles' and the Nicene—close their statements of Christian truth by the assertion of a belief in *the life to come*, and are *significantly silent* as to anything more than this. In our Book of Common Prayer again, fashioned as it is on the old lines, not a few passages have been noticed that imply the larger hope, and teach more or less directly the salvation of all men.

A brief digression here will enable me at once to illustrate clearly the doctrine of Reserve, and to add to our list of early universalists, S. HILARY, 360 A.D., a very eminent Father. Commenting on *Ps.* xv. 2, "And speaketh the "truth in his heart," this Father, after enforcing the duty of truth, proceeds thus, "But this is difficult by reason of the "sins and vices of the age. For *a lie is very often—plerum-"que—necessary*, and sometimes falsehood is useful; as "when we tell a lie to an assassin lying in wait, or upset "evidence on behalf of one who is in danger, or deceive a "sick man as to the difficulty of cure; and as the Apostle "teaches, our words should be seasoned with salt. There-

"fore it is that here the Holy Spirit has *tempered the character* "*of falsehood by shewing what are the conditions of lying* (has "shewn what a lie really is; has, in fact, permitted a lie "under certain conditions), saying, as ORIGEN might, 'He "that slandereth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his "friend,' (shewing) that the guilt of lying is in the hurt "done to a neighbour. I append the original sentence "'Spiritus Sanctus falsitatis affectum mendacii conditionibus "temperavit, Origenianum dicens * * ut crimen mendacii "in incommodo haberetur alieno.'" These words may be fairly said to *authorise lying*, where lying is deemed useful or the truth hurtful. We can thus never be certain that any Father holding (as almost all did) the doctrine of Reserve, really disbelieves the larger hope, because he denies it in words. He *may deny it and yet at heart firmly believe it.* But a more frequent case, and one of greater interest is, where the Fathers use on this subject inconsistent language. Here, I think, no doubt can reasonably arise as to the propriety of claiming such Fathers as really holding universalism. These Fathers were acute and keen reasoners, weighing well each word. No hypothesis other than belief in its truth, can reasonably account for language teaching universalism, while passages contradictory of it are at once explained by the doctrine of Reserve. Therefore I claim S. HILARY (though he teaches at times an opposite doctrine) as in heart an advocate of the larger hope. One such passage has just been given (page 249). I add two others. Commenting on the parable of the one sheep lost out of ninety and nine, he says, "This one sheep is man, "and by one man the *entire race is to be understood* * * the "ninety and nine are the heavenly angels. * * and by us "(mankind) who *all are one* (see p. 236) the number of the "heavenly church is to be filled up. And therefore it is "that *every creature* awaits the revelation of the sons "of GOD."—In *S. Matt.* c. xviii. This extract teaches universalism plainly. The *whole human race*, who *are one*, are the one lost sheep, which is destined to be found by the Good Shepherd. Again, S. HILARY has a long and

interesting comment on *Ps.* ii. 8-9, pervaded by the larger hope. In giving to CHRIST the ends of the earth as his possession is meant, he says, a dominion, *absolutely universal*, one to be summed up in S. PAUL'S words, which teach "That "every knee of things in heaven and earth and under the "earth are to bend in JESUS'S name" (a passage very dear to the early universalists). And as to the nature of this supremacy over all, S. HILARY proceeds to say that by CHRIST'S "ruling the nations with a rod of iron" is indeed meant the care of the Good Shepherd; and by "breaking "them in pieces like a potter's vessel" is really signified the vessel's *restoration*. "In this way GOD will bruise and "break the nations of HIS inheritance, so as to *reform* "them." And the breaking of the vessel, he says, takes place "When the body, being dissolved by death, and thus "broken up, the restoration shall be effected by the "artificer's will." These words recall some extracts given on pp. 84-5. But the original text of S. HILARY, of which I have given the merest summary, is very suggestive, and its universalistic drift is *unmistakeable*. Other passages of similar tone occur in *De Trin. Lib.* ii., and again *Lib.* xi., and in comments on *Ps.* cxliii. and lxviii.

From the Church we turned to consider the all-important question of the teaching of Holy Scripture. I have pointed out how, even in the Old Testament, there are intimations from the very first of a future blessing, designed to embrace all the race of man. These intimations become more and more distinct as the plan of GOD is more fully disclosed, and both Psalmists and Prophets unite in their promises of a golden age yet to come, when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The New Testament received more minute atten-

tion, due to its supreme importance. The passages—at least the more important ones—supposed generally to teach the popular creed, have been carefully considered, and we have seen reason to conclude that they, one and all, while emphatically warning sinners of the wrath to come, teach nowhere an *endless* punishment, nowhere an unending Hell.

Next, I have dwelt on this, surely, very suggestive fact, that in not a few cases the very arguments from Scripture, alleged in favour of the popular creed do, in fact, when fairly understood, teach the reverse. Thus you remember how a chapter was devoted to a brief discussion of certain classes of texts, usually quoted in favour of the popular belief, *e.g.*, those speaking of GOD'S 'election of the few,' of 'death,' of 'judgement,' of 'fire,' of 'the ages.' I have attempted to show that the true teaching of Holy Scripture on all these points is in absolute harmony with the larger hope ; that to insist on one and all of these points is but to bring into clearer relief the doctrine of universal salvation. But our examination of the New Testament has not been confined to the general points just referred to. Two chapters, vi. and vii. have been devoted to a series of notes, designedly brief and simple, pointing out how full the New Testament is of passages (alas, neglected or explained away), and yet distinctly teaching or implying the final

salvation of all men. So deeply important is this evidence furnished by the New Testament in favour of a universal salvation, that I venture here to append a brief summary of the passages already quoted.

In chapter vi., the evidence furnished by the writings of the Evangelists has been considered. Let me point out how clear it is, how emphatic. Thus we have seen how to CHRIST is assigned a kingdom absolutely without bound or limit; * how *all* flesh are to see the salvation HE gives. You have read how the leaven of HIS Kingdom must work on until the *whole* is leavened, and the Good Shepherd seek on, till each sheep HE has lost is found. You have read how the Son of Man came to seek and save, not some of the lost, but simply "that which was lost," *i.e.*, simply "the "lost." HIS mission is again described as having, as its object, the salvation of the world, and HE is said *to take away* the sin of the whole world. Do these terms fairly represent a partial salvation, are they honestly consistent with it? Again, it is said that *all things* have been given to the Son, and that all that is so given shall come to HIM. He is repeatedly described as the Saviour of the world—which yet HE does not in fact save on the popular view—as the Light of the world.

* The passages alluded to, in these and the following paragraphs, have been already given at length in chapters vi.-vii.

HE is said not to offer but to *give* life to the world; a totally different thing! He says (no words can be more absolute), speaking of HIS CROSS, that HE will draw *all* men unto HIMSELF. HE adds, that HE came not to judge, but to save the world. All these passages are familiar: true, but can you possibly, on any fair theory of the meaning of human language, reconcile them with the horrors of endless sin, or with a partial salvation? If the sin of the *whole world be taken away*, how shall there be a Hell for its endless punishment? If *all* things without exception (the original is the widest possible) are given to CHRIST, and all so given to HIM shall come to HIM, can you reconcile this with unending misery? But let us go on: we find language over and over again employed by the Evangelists, quite as strong and as decisive against the popular creed as that just quoted. When, for instance, we read in *S. John* how GOD'S Son was manifested for the very purpose of *sweeping away the works of the Devil*; is that consistent by any possibility with the preserving these works in Hell? Is there no significance in CHRIST'S telling us that HE is "alive unto the "ages, and has the *keys* of Hell and death?" Or again, what does the promise to make *all* things new mean? If this be not a promise of universal restoration, what is it? Again, remember the promise that there shall be no more curse, and *no more pain*. Lastly, ponder over

the glorious vision of the *Apocalypse*, where *every creature* in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth, is described as joining in the song of praise to GOD and to the Lamb; and ask yourself if less than a universal salvation can possibly satisfy the plain sense of these words of Scripture. Such are some passages already quoted (see chapter vi.); and yet these are by no means the whole of the evidence the New Testament furnishes. We have next to consider a very large body of fresh passages, quite as distinctly teaching the same truth, furnished by the Epistles of S. PAUL, S. PETER, and that to the *Hebrews* (see chapter vii).

S. PAUL'S Epistles especially are full of the most glowing anticipations of the universal reign of CHRIST, and the assured triumph of His Kingdom over all evil and sin. Thus ABRAHAM is to receive the world, and no less, as HIS portion, *i.e.*, in GOD'S elect seed all are to be saved. Whatever the Fall has done to injure man is to be repaired, and much more than repaired, by the gift of GOD'S grace in CHRIST. But is it possible *to undo all that sin has done if a single soul* *

* "If but one soul were to remain in the power of the Devil, "Death, or Hell, to all endless eternity, * * then the Devil, Death, "and Hell would have something to boast of against GOD; * * and "thus Death would not be entirely swallowed up in victory, but "always keep something of his sting, and Hell would ever more be "able to make a scorn of those who would say, 'O Hell where is thy "victory?'"—*The Everlasting Gospel—Paul Siegvolck*, 1753.

be left in endless loss? would not S. PAUL be in fact speaking *untruly* in such a case? Further, the same Apostle assures us that the *whole creation* shall be delivered into the glorious liberty of GOD'S children. And again he argues that the very fact of GOD'S giving HIS Son proves that with HIM all things are given—the original word is the widest possible, and certainly includes all souls. Again, *all* Israel are to be saved (and Israel's salvation is that of the world, see p. 149), for, adds the Apostle, GOD'S gifts and calling are indefeasible—words significant in the highest degree, for what is the popular creed but an emphatic assertion that GOD'S gifts can be set at naught? And what S. PAUL here asserts is echoed in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, which assures us of the immutability of GOD'S counsel. Again, has GOD shut up *all* in unbelief, it is, S. PAUL says, that HE may have mercy upon *all*. Does '*all*' mean '*some*' in the latter clause, and not in the former here?

Once more, the same Apostle assures us—and mark these words, for they are surely conclusive—that if the first ADAM brings death universally, then the second ADAM is to bring universal life. If sin abounds, *much more* shall grace abound. Weigh these words well, for in saying that the second ADAM has in fact failed in myriads of cases to undo the evil caused by the Fall, you are giving these words of Scripture the flattest

contradiction that it is possible to give. Then as to CHRIST'S empire, the Apostle says it must extend universally, that to HIM *every* knee must bow—"All creation, all things, *whatsoever* and "*wheresoever they be.*"—*Lightfoot on Phil.* ii. 10 —and *every* tongue confess; that one day—at the end—GOD shall be *all in all.* In fact S. PAUL never seems to weary of claiming this universal dominion for CHRIST. *All* things are to be gathered together in one in CHRIST (not in Hell surely !) words repeated even more emphatically when the Apostle asserts that by the blood of the Cross, *all* things have been reconciled unto the Father. Does the reconciliation of all things, *i.e.*, the universe, by the Cross mean the sending of countless myriads to endless pain ? Further, the Apostle assures us that the living GOD is the Saviour of *all*, that JESUS CHRIST has *abolished death*, that the grace of GOD bringeth salvation to *all* men. Are these statements consistent with a partial salvation ?

S. PETER, too, speaks to the same effect. He tells the wonderful story of CHRIST preaching *to the dead*, who had once been disobedient and were apparently *lost;* a story whose significance is the very greatest possible, as indicating how behind the veil CHRIST works on to heal and to save : and in his second Epistle adds, that the Lord is not willing that *any* should perish. Is GOD'S deliberate counsel—such is the

original word—to come to nothing? Then in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* we have some remarkable testimony to the same effect. Thus we have there repeated the assertion that *all* things are to be put under CHRIST; that HIS object in dying was to destroy the Devil; that once in the end of the age HE has appeared to put away, *i.e.*, *abolish sin* by HIS sacrifice of HIMSELF. Do say how the abolition of sin is or can be consistent with maintaining evil in Hell for ever? Finally, let me remind you how precise and emphatic the promise is (see *Hebrews* viii. 10-1), that one day *all* shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. Thus, the popular creed stands opposed—hopelessly opposed—to the plainest teaching of the Word of GOD; nay, it may be said virtually to deny GOD HIMSELF, because if we are to believe in GOD at all, there is no room for a *defeated* GOD. For as S. JEROME say, in words which I have already quoted (p. 157), "None can hinder HIS doing as HE "wills, * * Now HIS will is that all should be "saved." Therefore, either GOD wills to save all men, and if so, HE will assuredly accomplish this; or HE does not so will. The first proposition involves the larger hope. The second is mere Calvinism.* I can see no rational alternative.

Such is a very brief outline of the teaching of

* And thus, since Calvinism has fallen into universal discredit, there has been a steady movement towards the larger hope on all sides.

Scripture, for I have not by any means cited here all its promises of universal salvation. It is no case of isolated texts. It is no case of building upon Eastern metaphors, of dogma resting upon misconceptions of the original. It is quite the contrary. It is evidence, clear and unambiguous, and not this alone, but repeated over and over again, as we have seen. We have, in fact, line upon line, promise upon promise, assertions—*varied*, *reiterated*, *accumulated*—yet amid all their variety, pointing with one consent to this great central thought, to the *completeness of the triumph of Jesus Christ*, to the boundless nature of His empire over all souls; to the assurance of a victory—infinite and absolute—won by His Incarnation, His Death, and His Resurrection over all the powers of evil. In the words of our ablest living commentator, "The "Father willed through CHRIST to reconcile the "universe once more unto HIMSELF,. * * and "so to restore all things *whatsoever* and *where-*"*soever they be.*"—*Lightfoot on Col.* i. 20.

This being so, let me next ask, have you, who maintain the popular creed, ever quietly thought over the terrible slight you offer to the whole work of CHRIST, to His Incarnation and His passion, by asserting the final loss of countless myriads of our race? HE has come, we know, to save the world. HE, the *Almighty One; very God of very God:* but you are never tired of

proclaiming in all your writings, in all your pulpits, His defeat! His Apostles announce, in language strong and clear, in words that still burn and throb with life, His victory over death. You announce death's victory over Him, for Hell filled to all eternity with its wailing millions is His defeat, nay His utter defeat. Could you more effectually make light of His atonement? Could you, in fact, more truly pour scorn on His Cross and Passion? I read in His word that in His death all (actually) died (so vital, so close is the union between Him and all the race of man). Are they then to go down to endless pains, those lost ones *who died with Jesus*—(2 *Cor.* v. 14, *Rev. Ver.*)—those souls of His creating, of His redeeming, still wet, so to speak, with His most precious blood, still pursued by His love (for love is unfailing); are these souls to spend an eternity of torment? Am I to proclaim this as the victory of Jesus Christ, this as the glad tidings of great joy?

Permit me further, for I want again and again to protest against the dishonour done to God's word by the popular creed—permit me before I leave this solemn subject, to ask what the meaning is on the popular view, of the oft-repeated promises of the New Testament to Christ of a universal empire? What do they mean, if they do not really mean, that to Christ's kingdom there shall one day be actually no limit?

Is it true, in the natural acceptance of the words, that in CHRIST, *all things*, *Eph.* i. 10—the original words are the widest possible—are to be summed up. Is it *true* that CHRIST has actually abolished death; that HE has been manifested for this very end, that HE might destroy *all* the works of the Devil? Or is it a mere dream of the Evangelist, when HE tells us that GOD has given to HIM all things, and that all things that the Father hath given to HIM shall come to HIM? But if all this, and far, far more than this, is actually written in Holy Scripture, how can it be truly taught that sin and Hell are *endless?* What! sin everlasting, and yet the sins of the world taken away by the Lamb of GOD. Hell for ever preying on the countless tribes of the lost, and yet the whole creation delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of GOD.

Only reflect and see what it is the popular creed is, in fact, teaching. CHRIST, "holding "the keys of Hell" and never opening! CHRIST "making all things new," and yet things and persons innumerable not renewed! The Good Shepherd "seeking till He finds," and yet never finding! "No more pain," and yet pain for evermore! "No more curse," and yet Hell echoing for ever with the curses of the lost! "Tears wiped from every eye," and yet the lost "for ever weeping! Every creature which is in "Heaven and on the earth and under the earth,

"and such as are on the sea and all that are in "them, saying blessing and glory and honour to "GOD," and yet an infinite number of creatures shut up for ever and ever in misery! "All "made alive in CHRIST," and yet myriads sunk in hopeless, endless death.

Finally, what remains to say? It remains only that I plead for the acceptance of the larger hope, as taught and believed by so many in primitive days; a hope, and a firm faith that it has ever been the purpose of our Father to save all HIS human children. To believe less than this would be, not alone to contradict the plain and repeated teachings of Holy Scripture, as I have tried to shew, but to mistake its whole scope and purpose. For what is the Bible? it is the story of a Restoration, wider, deeper, mightier than the Fall, and therefore bringing to every child of ADAM healing and salvation. It is not, as the popular creed teaches, the self-contradictory story of One Almighty to save, and yet not, in fact, saving those for whom HE died. It is the story of infinite love seeking "till it find," a love that never faileth, *never*, though Heaven and earth pass away. It is the story of the unchanging purpose of the unchanging GOD.

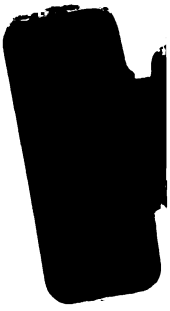
Further, by this larger hope, and by *it alone*, can we accept and harmonize every line and letter of Holy Scripture, its solemn threatenings

to the sinner, no less than its repeated promises of life to all. Those threatenings I accept implicitly. They are, as we have seen, fully reconciled with the promises of universal salvation the moment we have learned to realize the true meaning of GOD'S judgements and penalties, and led by HIS word to see in 'the ages' yet to come HIS purposes being steadily worked out.

Yes, I believe, because the New Testament so teaches, and all reason confirms it, that to this brief life there succeed many ages, and that "through these ages an increasing purpose runs." In these 'ages' and during their progress it is that GOD'S threatenings find their complete fulfilment for the ungodly, and the many successive scenes of the drama of redemption are slowly unfolded, and carried to completion. For GOD'S purpose to save all men once declared must stand firm for ever from HIS very nature; and to this end it is that HIS penalties are inflicted, that in JESUS CHRIST, one day, all created things may be summed up. And this being so, we who hold the larger hope are prepared fully to believe that there await the sinner in 'the ages' yet to come, GOD'S fiery judgements; that æonian discipline protracted till the will of man yield to the will of "our Father," and till, as in the silent prophecy of the familiar words, "that will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

For this I plead, for a hope, wide as that which

swelled the Saviour's heart, when looking steadily at the Cross HE said "I, if I be lifted up will "draw all men unto ME." I plead for the simple truthfulness of the explicit promise made by all GOD's Holy Prophets, "that there shall "be a restitution of all things"—*Acts* iii. 21. The issue may be simply stated, *is this promise true* or *is it untrue?* The dilemma cannot be avoided—*yes* or *no?*

For my part, in this promise I believe—in the true catholicity of the Church; of CHRIST, as destined to embrace all mankind in the power of HIS redemption, as something which no will can resist, to which all things must yield one day in perfect submission, love and harmony. I plead for the acceptance of this great central truth, that the victory of JESUS CHRIST must be final, absolute and complete—that nothing can impair the power of HIS Cross and passion to save the human race. I believe that HE shall see of the travil of HIS soul, and be satisfied. And I feel assured that less than a world saved, a universe restored, could not satisfy the heart of JESUS CHRIST, or the love of our Father. Therefore in these pages I have pleaded for the larger hope. Therefore I believe in the vision, glorious beyond all power of human thought fully to realise, of a 'Paradise regained,' of a universe from which every stain of sin shall have been swept away, in which every heart shall be full of blessedness, in which "GOD shall be All and in All."—*Amen.*

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